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THE EFFECT OF CHARACTER ON MINISTERIAL USEFULNESS.

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BERRY STREET.

THE subject of the present address is, *the effect of character on ministerial usefulness*. In every different employment of life, there is an intimate connexion between a good character and usefulness. By the possession of a single excellence, or of uncommon skill and ability, a person may render himself in a measure useful, in the ordinary occupations of life, or in some of the learned professions, while his character is, in other respects, very defective. Important legal advice, or medical aid, may be given by those, whose conduct and dispositions are very far from the standard of the Gospel. A family, or a community, may derive benefit from the industry of one, whose general example could by no means be safely followed. In such cases, however, the individual would be much more useful, were his character what it ought to be ; and perhaps, in every such instance, he is doing injury in one respect, while in another, he is beneficial to his fellow-creatures. But in the station, which the ministers of the Gospel occupy, there is a peculiar necessity for excellence of character, in order to usefulness. This necessity results from the grand moral purpose, which they

are designed to accomplish. The object of their labours is to form men to virtue and holiness, and in this way to prepare them for future happiness. But the official duties, which they are called to perform, will effect little toward this object, while their own characters are grossly defective. If they are visibly and habitually under the influence of dispositions and motives, which their office obliges them to reprobate in others, their reproofs will probably be received with indifference, if not with disgust. If they are notoriously destitute of the virtues, which they recommend, or fall into the vicious or irreligious practices, which in their public ministrations they cannot but condemn, their example will completely counteract the effect of their preaching. The influence of example is great in every situation; in ministers of the Gospel, a good example is indispensable. How can they effectually dissuade from vice, who are themselves the slaves of it? How can they hope successfully to recommend virtue and religion, whose lives testify, that they are strangers to those delightful paths? In the Christian orator, more than in any other, sincerity and a practical conformity to his own instructions, are absolutely requisite. In the view of his hearers, his life must be the test of his sincerity; and if it is not proved to their satisfaction in this way, he will labour in vain. When they cannot but perceive a striking contrast between what he inculcates, and what he practises, they will consider his public services as a matter of form, to which he attends from motives of worldly interest; and instead of being benefitted by his labours, their minds will be occupied by the proverb, 'Physician, heal thyself.' Instead of feeling reprov'd for their own faults, they will rather be disposed to ask, 'Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?' If they cannot perceive in him a pattern of the excellencies, which he recommends to them; if they find that he has no inclination to exhibit an example of the Christian virtues; if he show them the way only by his words; they can hardly avoid the remark, 'he does not believe his own instructions worth observing, and why should we?' In their minds he will be compared to the senseless guide, which points out to others a way, which it never travels; and the whole effect of his ministry will be to inspire them with the persuasion, that virtue and religion are a

drudgery, to which he is unwilling to submit ; that a life of holiness is a life of gloom and misery ; and that the way to enjoy themselves in this world, is to cast off the restraints of the Gospel.

The character of a minister, as connected with his usefulness, may be contemplated in two points of light. In the first place, he must exemplify the common virtues, which Christianity inculcates. He must faithfully observe all the precepts, which relate to ordinary conduct, and to mankind generally. He must not imagine that his office excuses him from the obligation of those virtues, which adorn the life of a private Christian ; or that the sanctity of his employment will render that a good act in him, which would be a crime in another. On the other hand, he should feel himself under peculiar obligations to be holy, upright, and kind, in all manner of conversation, in all his intercourse with mankind, and in all the relations of life. He should feel himself bound by more than ordinary ties, to conduct aright in all the connexions, which he sustains ; and to manifest the most sacred regard to the claims of justice, fidelity, charity, and mercy. If he is conscious of a gross or habitual violation of these obligations, he cannot urge them on others with confidence and satisfaction. That clergyman, who allows himself to speak evil of others ; to be forward in foolish talking and jesting ; to spend his time in idleness ; to associate with the vicious portion of society, in their coarse amusements ; to overreach others in his pecuniary transactions ; or who shows in any other way, that his thoughts and affections are occupied with the vanities, or the gains of this world, cannot rationally hope to be respectable or useful. The nature of the employment, to which he is by profession devoted, requires him to keep at a distance from these things. If it is important for any, it is peculiarly so for him, to avoid even the appearance of evil ; to give no occasion for others to suspect, that he is actuated by any sordid motive, that he has assumed the sacred office chiefly for his own ease, honour, or profit. So far as he is suspected of being actuated by views of this kind, his usefulness is at an end. He will not be regarded with affection and confidence ; his instructions will not be listened to with respect and delight.

To abstain from what is usually termed vice, to be free from those faults, which would bring reproach on a man in any station, is but a small part of the duty of him, who sustains the office of a Christian minister. We look to him not only for an exemption from disgraceful vices, but for an example of no common virtue, for a pure and elevated character, for an enlarged and generous benevolence, for a sacred regard to the principles of justice and integrity, and for all the points of a supreme love to God, and a genuine faith in Christ. We justly expect of him an habitual regard to all the precepts of the Gospel. This is the general expectation of mankind, in reference to the Christian minister ; and though they do not look for perfection in him, yet, if his conduct or disposition is so different from what the Gospel requires, as to lead them to suspect his sincerity and piety, and to attribute his attendance on his official duties to a worldly or selfish spirit, they are not in a condition to be improved by his labours, and his usefulness is, in the same degree, destroyed.

There may have been a state of society, in which vicious clergymen were caressed and honoured. But happily for us, my fathers and brethren, we do not live in such a state. There never was a period, however, when ministers of such a character could be useful. Their influence would necessarily be, not to improve, but to corrupt. They would be tolerated only in an ignorant, superstitious, and licentious age ; and what had already become bad, they would be likely to render worse. In such a state of society, they might retain their places and their authority ; and the veneration, with which their office was regarded, might conceal from the vulgar eye the deformities of their character. But the object of such a clergy would be, not to be useful to others, not to promote the interests of virtue and religion, not to render mankind wiser and better ; but to secure their own influence over the people, and to gratify their own sordid, ambitious, and corrupt passions. In our state of society, a minister of the Gospel must have a fair, honourable, and pure character, not only if he would be useful in his office, but if he would enjoy even common respect. There is, perhaps, no other station, in which a man would be so certainly and

completely degraded in the estimation of the publick, by an immoral course. The reputation of a clergyman is of the most delicate kind ; it is easily blasted. Sins, which others may commit with a sort of impunity, would fix an indelible stigma on his character ; and drive him, not only from the pulpit, but from all reputable society. We cannot expect, nor can we wish, that the community, in which we reside, will be so blinded by a superstitious veneration for our office, as not to regard the moral character of the incumbents. On the other hand we have reason to rejoice, that they are watchful and jealous in this matter ; and that they insist on purity, integrity, and elevation of character, in those, whom they support as religious teachers. The liberty of examining and judging for ourselves, respecting the instructions of the Bible, I trust we shall always claim, and always enjoy. But the liberty of pursuing a course, which the Gospel condemns, and which is incompatible with our obligations, and with our usefulness, as ministers of Christ, it is to be hoped we shall never desire.

In the second place, the usefulness of a Christian minister depends on the fidelity, with which he performs the appropriate duties of his office. A gross neglect of them, or a careless and indolent mode of performing them, will render his labours of little value. When a man professes and engages to give up himself to the spiritual instruction and moral improvement of a society, and receives an adequate and honourable compensation for his services, that, by being free from the ordinary cares of life, he may devote himself to their religious interests, common honesty requires him to attend to the duties of his station, and to employ his time and talents for the benefit of those, with whom he is connected. They have a right to expect, not only that he will sustain a fair and honourable reputation among men, but that he will exert his best powers in those interesting services, which, at their request, he has undertaken ; that he will exercise his reason in the study of the Scriptures, and give them the result of his researches ; that he will publickly instruct them in the great principles of religion and virtue, and in the various branches of duty ; bringing forth out of his treasure, things new and old ; that he will cultivate the spirit of devotion, and strive to imbue them with sentiments of piety ; that, by his

example and exertions, he will endeavour to promote their intellectual and moral improvement ; that he will, at all times, be to them a faithful and kind friend ; and that in seasons of affliction, he will present to them the rich consolations and hopes of the Gospel. These are but reasonable expectations ; and if they are disappointed by the indolence, the levity, or the worldliness, of a minister, he proves himself unfaithful in his work, and prevents his usefulness. He is even guilty of a fraud upon those, whose best interests he is bound by every tie to promote. He is chargeable with a dishonesty, which, in an ordinary transaction, would expose a man to legal punishment.

An unblemished moral character, a life of purity, and a faithful performance of official duties, always of indispensable obligation in the ministers of the Gospel, were never more essential than at the present time. Without these, we cannot expect to see union, peace, and prosperity, in our societies. Among us there is nothing but these moral ties, to bind a Christian society to their minister. They must love and respect him, or they will no longer consent to have him for their publick teacher ; and we would hope, for the honour of our common nature, that they would not love and respect him, if he were grossly defective as to moral or ministerial character. If individuals, who become disaffected, have not sufficient influence to effect his removal, they will probably leave his society. To this measure our laws liberally grant every facility. Our citizens are not required to contribute for the support of a clergyman, whose character or official service they do not approve ; and if the fault is obviously on his side, it is certain that they will lose nothing in the publick estimation, by withdrawing from him. There may be instances, in which individuals have separated themselves from a religious society for inadequate reasons. But if this is ever done in consequence of immorality, duplicity, or indolence, on the part of the minister, I need not say on whom the guilt will rest. There must be something honourable in those, who will not consent to have for their religious instructor a man, obviously unworthy of their confidence ; a man, who, in his ordinary deportment, or in the duties of his office, will betray a gross want of integrity and fidelity. Should we know an instance, in which a society continued satisfied and

united under the ministrations of one, grossly deficient as to moral character, or official duty, we should justly consider it an evidence of general and uncommon depravity ; nor could they redeem their character from this imputation, otherwise than by insisting on his reformation or dismissal.

There may be evils growing out of the facility, with which individuals can separate themselves from a religious society. It is a liberty, which may be peculiarly liable to abuse. But can we, my fathers and brethren, wish to have it taken away ? Can it be pleasing to us, to have men bound to us by the mere force of law ; and obliged to contribute to our maintenance, whatever may be their views of our character and labours ? Is it not much better for us to have them drawn around us, and attached to us, by the influence of our own example, and by our fidelity in discharging the appropriate duties of our office ? Will not this state of things have a powerful tendency to elevate the standard of ministerial character, and to render us watchful and circumspect, in what regards our own conduct, as well as affectionate and faithful in what relates to them ? On the ground on which we now stand, in relation to society, all our interests are connected with our official fidelity, and with the general purity and integrity of our characters. He that would be chief of all, must be servant of all. If we would enjoy influence among men, if we would obtain their confidence, respect, and affection, if we would secure a competent number of them for our hearers, we must faithfully serve them in the duties of our office, and exhibit an example of Christian virtue and piety. If we will not do thus much, we shall inevitably sink in the estimation of the publick, just in proportion as their favourable opinion becomes valuable. The more elevated and purified the general state of society becomes, the more necessary will personal excellence, and official faithfulness, be to the ministers of the Gospel, and the less can they depend on the mere force of law, or the mere sanctity of office. We have no venerable establishment for our defence and support ; we cannot depend on the partiality of a powerful individual for presentation to an eligible office in the church ; we must recommend ourselves to the mass of society by cultivating the excellencies of the Christian character, and by diligently attending to the duties of the Christian ministry.

The foregoing remarks are applicable to all the ministers of the Gospel. May I not add, that, as Unitarians, we have peculiar need of attending to our general deportment, and to the appropriate duties of our office? Belonging to a sect, which is every where spoken against; which multitudes regard with a degree of horror; against which there exist prevalent and deep-rooted prejudices; and which is considered by a large portion of the community, as hostile to the interests of true religion, and fatal to all genuine piety, how can we hope to maintain our ground, unless we are well protected by the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left? How can we expect to convince our brethren of their mistake respecting us, unless we exhibit in our lives, the good fruits of those principles, which we profess and inculcate? We cannot gain them by the strength of our arguments, and the charms of our reasoning; for either they will not read our books at all, or they will read with the fixed impression, that they must not be convinced; that their salvation depends on their rejecting our doctrine, and adhering firmly to their own system. We cannot win them over by persuasion, for they will regard it as a temptation of Satan, and will feel bound to resist it accordingly. But in holy living, in examples of piety, integrity, charity, and faithfulness, there is an eloquence, which can hardly fail of convincing; a force, which sooner or later must prevail; a voice, which in the end will be heard; a language, which few can eventually misunderstand. If our usefulness is at all connected with the dissemination of those principles, which we receive, as constituting the unadulterated Gospel of Christ, then is there a peculiar necessity, that we sustain such a character, cherish such dispositions, and perform our official duties in such a manner, as all will acknowledge to be excellent. Be it then our constant care, fathers and brethren, to pursue the only course, in which we can be extensively useful to our fellow-men; to show in our whole deportment, that we are attached to a religion, which is surpassed by none in the fruits of piety, active benevolence, kindness, forbearance, and humility; and that we have been introduced into the sacred office, not for the purpose of spending an indolent or honourable life, but, by discharging aright its interesting duties, to promote the moral improvement, and the everlasting welfare of mankind.

ON THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN, AS FOLLOWING CLOSE UPON
ITS COMMISSION.

EZEKIEL XII. 27.

‘Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come; and he prophesieth of times afar off.’

It was with the indifference, discovered in the language just quoted, that the prophet Ezekiel was heard, when, as the immediate messenger of God, he announced to the Jewish people the approaching desolation and captivity coming upon them, as the punishment of their sins. It was indeed only temporal calamities, which this people had to fear;—the desolation of war, carried on with the ferocity which ancient manners allowed; their own destruction in the ruin of their country, or the protracted sufferings of captivity and exile; and each individual might regard it as possible, that these judgments of God would be deferred beyond the period of his life, and only fall upon his children. Still, there may appear at first sight something remarkable in the disposition of mind, with which the warnings of the prophet were received. But the same disposition exists at the present day, a similar negligence and carelessness respecting the present and future consequences of a sinful course of life, and exists too in those, to whom, if there be any truth in religion, objects of fear are proposed, much more dreadful than any temporal calamities. There are men, who, without any settled disbelief of the moral government of God, or of those awful sanctions by which his laws are enforced, do yet give themselves up to a neglect of duty, yield easily to temptation, or harden themselves in the commission of bad actions; and this too, with but little apparent anxiety about the consequences of their conduct. They represent to themselves these consequences as remote, and, like other things future, uncertain and contingent; to be intercepted perhaps by repentance; or which it will be time enough to think about, and guard against, as they approach; and when their view is directed to what Christianity teaches of the rewards and punishments of another life, they turn away, as from a vision of many days to come, and a prophecy of times that are far off.

But we shall perceive the folly and danger of this state of mind, when we recollect that some part of the punishment of sin commonly begins with its commission, and that some of its consequences are felt in the present life; and when we, further, direct our attention to the connexion of this life with another, and to the punishment which awaits it there, and consider that this punishment, however delayed, cannot be very distant.

In the first place, then, the punishment of sin frequently commences in this life, and directly follows its commission. The moral infection, that may destroy the soul, is not only immediately received, but immediately discovers its virulence. The unalterable relations between guilt and misery, which exist under the moral government of God, do sometimes at once display themselves, and produce their effects. Though the present life be a state of discipline and not of retribution, yet even here, where the plan of providence is so imperfectly exhibited, that distinction between the good and the bad, which will be hereafter completed, is already commencing. The natural consequences of our actions here, though not sufficient as sanctions of the laws of God, are yet sufficient to give us warning of what may be expected hereafter, under the government of the same Being, by whom all things here are appointed. Let us consider, then, some of the natural consequences of sin, and some of the punishments to which it is exposed in this world.

The first class of punishments, which may be mentioned, are those resulting from publick opinion, and the common feelings and sentiments of mankind. Good men are valued, loved, and respected; bad men are contemned, hated, and despised. It is true, that publick favour and applause are not very accurately apportioned to the merit of different characters. There are vices, in which there is something of heroism, daring, and spirit, that dazzle and impose upon the vulgar, which they wonder at and celebrate, and forget their mischief in their splendour. There are virtues of a certain class, such as humility, patience, and forbearance, whose value few know how to estimate, which make no claims upon applause, and are content if they escape insult and misrepresentation. Men's vices sometimes gain them followers and admirers; and their virtues sometimes expose them to hatred

and persecution ; and not unfrequently, he who steadily pursues his duty, must expect to encounter the ill will of some, perhaps of many, of those around him. There are situations, in which he who values most highly the praise of God, must relinquish the praise of men ; and there are situations too, in which we know it will be a dishonour and a wo to a man, that all have spoken well of him. These things are true, yet these things do not constitute the common and ordinary course of events, but are only exceptions to it. In the common course of providence, and according to those natural feelings, which God has given us all, virtue meets with approbation, love, and praise ; and vice finds a part of its punishment in disrepute, dislike, contempt, hatred, detestation and infamy. There are none, by whom the power of these sanctions is not felt ; not even by those few individuals, who have almost lost the moral characteristicks of our nature ; who are vicious without concealment or disguise ; who in the worst of causes can hardly encounter what good men have sometimes shrunk from in the best ; and of whose number, an individual, with talents equal to his vices, may now and then affect to brave the indignation of his fellow-men, by an assumption of misanthropy and scorn. These sanctions have a constant influence upon our conduct. We insist upon them continually, and perhaps, much too frequently, in our moral discourses and instructions. We are too apt to do good ourselves, and to exhort others to do good, principally from a regard to the notice and applause of men. We are too apt to make the fear of men the principal motive in avoiding evil.

These sanctions make themselves felt by all classes of men. The voice of publick opinion is heard where the laws are silent. It inflicts sometimes its severest penalties on those, whom no other human infliction can reach. With almost every other punishment of guilt, disgrace is, in some degree or another connected, and aggravates its severity. To him, whom human laws make their victim, it is often far worse, than any punishment these laws directly impose ; and to him, who is raised above human laws, or of whose crimes they take no cognizance, the brand, which infamy burns in upon the soul, and the lashes and stings of publick hatred, are often

as full of pain as any bodily suffering he might be made to endure. Publick sentiment does not sleep. It is watchful over its objects. Men cannot step aside far from those duties which it enforces, without encountering the censure of their fellow-creatures. The man, who seeks to acquire riches by dishonest arts, or unjust and cruel practices; the rich man, who thinks nothing of the means of usefulness he possesses, and employs no portion of his wealth in purposes of publick liberality or private charity; the man, who in some important station, without being accountable to any superior, neglects its duties; the profligate man of pleasure, who disregards the claims, and sports with the happiness of those with whom he is connected; the man of petty malignity, who habitually insults the feelings and disturbs the comfort of those about him; these, and persons of various other classes, find the world withdrawing itself from them and leaving them alone; or they meet with notice, which is worse than neglect. They meet with a thousand nameless expressions of disrespect, aversion and contempt, and many also of a character sufficiently definable. They find, that however bad they may fancy mankind to be, yet that men, generally speaking, have not much disposition to encourage or tolerate the vices of others. Vice, as far as it respects our fellow-creatures, consists in the causing suffering to others, not for their ultimate advantage, nor for the vindication of any right, but in the indulgence or for the gratification of our own selfish passions and appetites. Its very essence is the doing wrong to others in some shape or another. It is the invading and laying waste other men's happiness for the sake of plundering for ourselves. It is natural, therefore, that he, who by discovering a disposition to do this, has, as it were, declared war upon society, should find society at war with him, and ready to make him feel its resentment and its power.

The next class of punishments, to which bad men are exposed, inflicted like those last mentioned, by their fellow-creatures, are such as are appointed by human laws and institutions. It is true, that human laws extend only to a small part of what is morally wrong in the characters of men. They extend only to actions, and to but few, comparatively speaking, even of these. But still their effect is not incon-

siderable, nor are those light evils which they inflict. Bodily pain, poverty, imprisonment, publick shame and death, are what they have directly in their power; and indirectly, as has been before said, they inflict infamy. The mark, which they set upon their object, no future good conduct can obliterate. He can hardly, if at all, regain any considerable degree of character and estimation. Indeed, so great is their effect, that some have been willing to attribute to them alone, the good order and peace of society. But this is not so. Government itself, unless it be a mere government of force and tyranny, a prison house for slaves, must, in order to be stable, and sufficient for its purpose, have for its foundation the moral, and consequently the religious principles, hopes and fears of the governed. Its own sanctions are not sufficient for its support.

The evils which human laws inflict, are as natural punishments of sin, and as evidently designed as such by God, as any other evils which, in the common course of his providence, follow its commission. God designed man to live in society; but society cannot exist without laws, nor these laws have effect without punishments. In so far then as God designed man for society, so far did he design those punishments without which society cannot exist.

The next consequences of a vicious course of life, which I shall mention, are the loss of fortune and health, and mental weakness, and degradation; the becoming what the world calls ruined, and what a Christian fears to be such, in a sense much more serious and awful. There are some vices, such as drunkenness and debauchery, of which these are, for the most part, the common and every day consequences; so that men wonder when they do not take place. Poverty, indeed, though the usual, is not the necessary consequence of intemperance and sensuality; and as to the other consequences mentioned, there are individuals, prudent in their vices, and regular in their excesses, who may succeed, or succeed at least for a considerable time, in avoiding even these; but such instances are exceptions to the common course of things. The world does not usually allow its vicious pleasures to be enjoyed at an easy purchase. Poverty, disease, pain, and disgrace are to be suffered in return; and these sufferings are sometimes exacted with dreadful severity. It is a mel-

ancholy and a pitiable sight, to see, what we too often may see, the wretched victims of intemperance and sensuality ; squalid, diseased, avoiding their former acquaintance, or meeting them with an apparent feeling of disgrace and inferiority ; attempting sometimes to conceal this feeling by an affected impudence ; debased and ruined as to their moral tastes and principles, and without any of that pride, which may sometimes supply the place of these ; their understanding and their other faculties of mind, weakened and debauched ; silly in their talk, and mean in their dispositions and purposes ; disconnected from society, without any of the common interests or pursuits of men ; flying from thought to intoxication, and recovering from this to a gloomy and restless state of mind, in which all reflection is made more bitter ; thinking perhaps, in these intervals of recollection, of what they are, and what they might have been ; recollecting how much cruel suffering they have caused to those with whom they are connected ; considering, it may be, what has been their conduct toward their families and children, those dependant on their exertions, and who had a right to look up to them for protection, comfort, and an introduction into life, but to whom they have been ministers only of misery and disgrace ; and reflecting, last of all, upon their own prospects in this world, and what they have to expect hereafter, when disease and intemperance shall have finished their work.

In these consequences of sin, which are so regular and natural ; for there is nothing much more regular and natural, than that habitual excess should destroy our bodies and our minds, and that poverty, where a man's fortune is dependant on his own exertions, should come along with it ; in these consequences, in which there is so little of what we call accident ; we may see the character and will of Him, by whom all things here are appointed and ordered. They are punishments directly and apparently from Him, who is the maker and judge of us all.

The next consequence of a vicious life, which may be mentioned, is the want of friendship and domestick happiness. A man is loved and valued as a friend, in proportion to his integrity, his generosity, his amiableness, his sincerity ; and we might go on to mention every other virtue, that can be

named ; and in proportion to his want of goodness, he is distrusted and avoided ; unless, indeed, he have the power of deceiving others with regard to his character, which, in so intimate a connexion, and especially in respect to those, whose friendship is much worth possessing, is not very easy to be accomplished. But, indeed, the peculiar gratifications of friendship, like the other pleasures of benevolence and good feeling, are pleasures, from which, for the most part, a bad man is, of course, excluded, by his very want of capacity for their enjoyment.

As it respects domestick happiness, there are some vices, such as those last spoken of, by which it is obviously and directly destroyed. But though a bad man may not have any vices, which operate immediately to its destruction, though he may not be debauched, or intemperate, or violent in his angry passions, or morose in his temper, or hard-hearted, or cruel, or tyrannical, or in any other way directly banish comfort from about him, yet still the very existence of a bad character is destructive of domestick enjoyment. In the unrestrained intercourse of domestick life, where the concealments worn in society, are thrown aside, men for the most part appear what they really are, and the character, whatever it may be, discloses itself and becomes visible. Now, where there is any thing known to be habitually bad in a man's character, he can hardly hope for esteem or respect, and where there is no esteem or respect, there cannot long exist much love or kindness. If, however, there were nothing in the character of a bad man, either directly or indirectly to destroy domestick happiness, still he is not well qualified for partaking of it. It is only by that mind, which is at peace with God and with itself, that its calm and deep-felt pleasures can be enjoyed. The bad man has no refuge from the evils of the world. His crimes, his fears, his remorse, his enmities, his mean and his restless passions, pursue him to his home and his fireside, pollute the place, and destroy its sacredness ; and peace and comfort fly before them.

The last consequences of sin, I shall mention, are those, which it has directly upon the mind of him by whom it is committed. The commission of sin is attended with secret uneasiness, and this from two causes. One of them is the pain, which in the very constitution of our nature, is

connected with it. No man, unless he be hardened in vice, does what he knows to be wrong without self-condemnation, and a feeling of being degraded. He feels, though he may not suffer himself to reflect, that he is becoming an outcast from the favour of God, and all the better part of his fellow-creatures ; that he is sacrificing to some low, present gratification, his hopes of the future, and his prospects of progressive improvement and glory ; that he is submitting, what is most excellent within him, to what is mean and vile ; and relinquishing all those pleasures, which belong to the higher and better part of our nature. It is true, that those feelings, which arise from quick moral sensibility, are soon blunted, when a man has once begun an habitual course of sin. But there is another cause of uneasiness, not so easily overcome. It is the fear of punishment ; a fear, of which every serious thought concerning the moral government of God, and our own future condition, tends to confirm the reasonableness. When a man, by habitually disobeying the laws of God, has, as it were, renounced his protection, and set about to be the sole artificer of his own happiness, and to rely on his own strength and wisdom in opposition to Omnipotence, he cannot always be free from some feeling of his dreadful insecurity. It is true, that in health and prosperity, the fear of future punishment may be driven away by business, by pleasure, or by passion ; but it will return upon him in sickness, in despondency, and in age. With regard, indeed, to bad men, such as we often find them, men irresolute in wickedness, who sin with the hope of repenting, who are, if we may so speak, by no means willing to break with religion altogether, and who try to make some compromise as to its requirements, and balance one part of their character against another ; to men of this class, we may believe, the fear of future punishment constitutes no small portion of alarm and disquietude.

These, which I have enumerated, are some of the natural consequences of sin in this world. There are, it is true, some bad men, who seem, in a considerable degree, to escape these consequences, and almost every other present punishment ; and there are those, who, not guilty of any flagrant crimes, yet very neglectful of religion and its peculiar duties, pass through life with their full share of prosperity. But the present consequences of sin, are by no means the

only, or the principal, sanctions by which the laws of God are enforced. They are of very considerable efficacy in regulating men's conduct here ; they are very important in constituting this life a state of discipline and instruction ; they give us some knowledge of the nature of the moral government under which we are, and of the character of God ; and thus confirm every thing, which religion teaches concerning his future disposals towards us ; but it is to these future disposals, we must principally look for the motives by which his laws are enforced.

There are not a few men, who would be shocked, if you were to call in question their belief in Christianity, who yet appear to be very little affected by what it reveals concerning the future punishment of the wicked. There are wild and loose notions respecting the mercy of God, which seem to have an effect upon the minds of many by whom they are not directly professed. The mercy of God is infinite ; but it would seem that nothing more can be expected from infinite mercy, than what has been actually done and unquestionably promised. The power has been given us of becoming virtuous and holy ; all necessary assistance has been offered, and the highest motives proposed to our exertions. If we despise these motives, if we reject this assistance, if we misuse our powers, if we pursue that course of conduct, the tendency of which is, to introduce confusion and misery among the works of God, we cannot expect, that the order of nature should for our sakes be reversed, and that there should be a special interposition to extricate us from the guilt and misery in which we have involved ourselves. Offering us every encouragement and assistance, God has ultimately intrusted us with our own destiny. What we are, and what we may enjoy or suffer, he has left to depend upon ourselves. We cannot be made virtuous against our will ; and without virtue, we cannot be made happy. If, when the time of our preparation is finished, we are found unfit for heaven, it is not possible, that there should be prepared for us a paradise of sensuality, or ambition, or gain. The unrestrained indulgence of our vicious passions, would in a short time be the worst misery—a misery that may, perhaps, constitute the principal part of those future sufferings, the nature of which is left in Scripture in such awful obscurity.

The hour is coming, and now is,—for to every man it is in effect, if not in reality, the hour of death,—*when the dead shall hear the voice of God, and they that hear shall live; and shall come forth, they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they who have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation.* With all our present consciousness, we shall be removed into another state; it may be of enjoyment, of which we have had scarcely a foretaste; or it may be of misery, of which we may form some conception from the question repeatedly proposed by our Saviour, *What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?* The time of this most awful change may be very near, or it may be somewhat more distant, but there is a period of no very great extent, within which all uncertainty will cease. *The vision is not for many days to come, nor the prophesy of times that are far off.*

ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF DEATH.

THAT death is the consequence of our being is taught us by the observation of every day, by the passage of every hour. The character of all things about us is that of decay and change. Dissolution is written on the glory of man in letters, which transient success may for a moment conceal, but which a day's revolution will set forth in their terrible clearness. The progress of time is marked by overthrow, and his path is traced by the ruins of happiness, and honour, and influence. The works of God change. We admire the glorious garment of the clouds thrown around the setting sun, and before our first fervour of admiration has subsided, the beauty has passed away; the sun has disappeared, and the darkness is gathering about us. And so it is with all beauty, and all the glory of earth; they are but fleeting clouds on which God's goodness has shed a momentary brightness. The world is full of life, but it is in continual succession. Myriads of beings surround us; we know not whence they come nor whither they go. We only learn that they are and that they are not, and the rapidity with which the one con-

dition follows the other would amaze us, if we had not become accustomed to their intimate connexion. Every person at some time or other thinks of himself as liable to the universal law. It is appointed that he shall die. No man can escape the recurrence of this thought in the course of his earthly pilgrimage. However death may be viewed, as the interruption of a life of pleasure, the end of a day of toil, or the first warning of a solemn judgment, it is more or less frequently in the minds of each of us. How can it be otherwise? None of us live alone in the world, without some tie, the rending of which makes us feel and think; and when death has broken it, we think about death, and perhaps feel that we are mortal. None are so blest, or I would rather say, so neglected by heaven, that their frailty is never declared to them in the dying accents of a friend, and to most of his earthly children God in his mercy sends many voices of entreaty and warning. How are they received? What notions do men entertain of death, when they are induced to think about it? Many wrong views are taken, many false ideas cherished, and they sometimes have no inconsiderable influence on the character. Let us inquire into some of these notions.

1. Many attach too much interest to the act of nature, by which the soul is released from the body. They think too much of what they seem to consider the process of dying. We hear them speak of the agonies of death with apprehension, and almost with shuddering. It is well that this dread should be removed, because the mind is distressed by unnecessary fears, and is diverted from the just grounds of anxiety. The sufferings which are with some timid minds the causes of many unhappy hours, if real, are physical, and may be imaginary. Their duration and violence depend on the nature of the constitution which is shaken, and of the disease by which it is prostrated. But it is a groundless apprehension that the last moments of life must be moments of bitter agony, that the spirit of man, like the demon which Jesus cast out, will 'hardly depart from' the body. Some may have heard the dying groans of a sinner, and seen how he clung to life, as if it were his only hold, and when that grasp was lost, he should be plunged into darkness and horror. Some may have witnessed the painful watch-

ing of friends to catch the expiring of that breath, which should release the sufferer from great bodily anguish, but it was peculiar sickness in the one case, and conscience in the other, which rendered the scene so awful. It is not the necessary condition of death that we should suffer. He does not come to us as a task-master, but as a friend, not to aggravate but to deliver from pain. Those who have seen the peaceful departure of the good can testify how gently the spirit has laid its covering off, and ascended to God, when death has been an infant's sleep, in its calmness and silence. Those who have attended the bed of the sick can testify how distress has retired as death drew nigh, when it seemed to send messengers of peace before it, that its own coming might be welcomed. Those who have been at the death-bed of the careless can testify how they have died without pain, as they died without repentance, when they neither suffered in patience, nor waited in hope, but sunk sullenly to rest. Let us not then be disquieted by a vain imagination of the horrors of death. The passage from this to another world is not strewn with thorns. There are far better reasons for looking with anxiety to the close of life. Let them be weighed by us sufficiently and in season.

2. Others take a directly opposite view of death. They anticipate a scene of joy, exultation and triumph. They wish that the song of the redeemed might commence on earth, and the spirit strike its first notes before it has heard them sounding from the heavenly harps. The fight is fought, and when the crown of victory is bestowed, shall not gratitude and praise burst forth? But the reward is not given on this side of the grave. The judgment of conscience has been passed, but the sentence of a more impartial judge must be heard, and the garments of light, that are laid up for the righteous, shall not till then be taken. The last emotions of the soul may be love and devotion; but the chamber of the dying does not seem to be the fit place for boasting and rapture. It is more important that the impression to which we allude should be corrected, because it is preserved by minds of great piety, and is interwoven with religious feelings. It springs from wrong views of some doctrines of religion, from an excess of what, within due limits, may be beneficial. We may have great confidence in God's mercy,

may have the testimony of a good conscience, and the belief that we have been sanctified, and kept by the truth, and these convictions may give us comfort and joy in our road to heaven; but propriety requires that, as we approach the end, we should be inclined to consider whether we carry with us all the graces, which we might have acquired, whether our characters will bear the scrutiny of omniscience, as safely as they endure our examination. It would seem, that if ever the soul should be filled with humble and anxious thoughts, it is when all the circumstances of its earthly being must soon cease, and it is going to be judged by an omniscient God. Memory must bring up so many hopes that have deluded, and so many sins that have attended us, and reveal so clearly the vanity of all trust in earth or in ourselves, that nothing but a reliance on the free grace of God can support us at such an hour. Cruel would it be to throw a single shade over the bright hopes of the departing Christian. Unfeeling indeed would he be, who should wish to impair the delight with which any one looks back to the conversations and religious joys of a deceased friend, but he is doing an unkindness to the souls of men, who helps to uphold, as a test of christian holiness, that which may be fallacious, and is not authorised by Christ. This is not the only instance in which sincere and pious men evince less deference to the Almighty, than they would to an earthly ruler. Let a man be summoned to appear before his sovereign to receive a reward, which he thought due to him, let him even be called from a dungeon to enjoy liberty and honour, and I much doubt whether he would enter the presence of that superior without trembling. Yet man, because the hour of his deliverance from earth, and of his expected sentence of approbation has arrived, may enter the presence of God with exultation. No, it should not be so. Frail man may not approach his Maker in prayer but with penitence; surely then he ought not to go to his glory revealed in heaven, with an unhesitating confidence. There is less of reverence than of error in such views. Judge not others by them, let them not be the guide of your own hopes.

3. There is another class, who view death neither with the feeling of dread nor of joy, but who look for it with indifference, or with ungrateful expectation. They know that this

existence has its limit ; and they ought to know that beyond that limit, lie retribution and eternity. They, however, do not permit the thought of a future being to disturb them, but carelessly go forward to meet it, when they may find it full of regrets and terrors. Some people jest most wickedly about death, and talk of it with a cold daring, that shocks a serious mind. Death is much oftener considered as the close of one state of action, than as the beginning of another, as a deliverance from trial, than as an entrance on retribution. To hear men discuss their neighbour's affairs, and speak of his mortality, what should we think but that they contemplated this most solemn of all events, simply in relation to this world, as affecting the distribution of wealth or honours ? To hear them refer to the frailty of their own lives, what influence should we suppose it had on their hearts, excepting as the destruction of their earthly schemes, or the termination of their earthly labours ? Men wish for death, call for it, complain that their lives are not at their own disposal ; men, who if they were cut off in their murmuring, would die with an oath on their lips and impiety in their hearts. It is folly to sigh for the grave ; we shall stand on its brink before we are prepared. It is worse than folly, it is ingratitude ; the world is a happy place to him, who will not shut his soul to its blessings. It is shameful haste to meet the reward of sin. The discontented man, whom God has sheltered with his providence, and over whom his paternal love has watched, nourishing, guiding, blessing him, murders himself,—for what ? that he may cast off the few evils, that have found their way into his portion of enjoyments and privileges ? that he may anticipate God's time, and cheat himself out of repentance ? that he may die in his guilt, and have its misery more sure and more speedy ? that he may escape the entreaties of mercy, and fling himself in the way of divine judgment ? He tells you he is weary of life, it has no good in store for him, and he can do no good to others ; and at the same moment that he utters these complaints, he is the partaker of mercies in an abundance, which Omnipotence alone could supply ; and in the midst of relations, affording a variety of usefulness, which a human mind could never have imagined. He tells you that he is driven on by insatiable curiosity, that he would learn something of this mysterious, endless future.

Yes, this world is too confined a field of knowledge for him ; the providence of God, and the mind of man are not deep enough for his research ; he cannot find sufficient to interest him for the few short years before him on earth ; he must quench his intellectual thirst in the waters of eternity. And where will they bear him ? To the mercy-seat ? No, he would not worship at its footstool. To heaven ? No, he would not follow the path which God commanded and Christ trod, the path of patience and duty. To sorrow, and the experience of spiritual suffering, will he go ; and could he come back to his brethren, he would tell them that life was too gracious a gift to be abused, and too pleasant a thing to be thrown away. The duellist, the man, who would give death two victims, and write, murderer, on the brow of each, talks loudly too, of the burthen of a character, which an insult has stained, and he had rather bear the punishment of deliberate crime, than this insupportable load. How sadly do men deceive themselves with words ! How madly do they rush, not on the abhorrence of the community, or the destruction of domestick peace, but on the guilt of murder ; on the pains, not of the first, but of the second death. They dare to enter the unseen state with blood on their souls. Will it open a way to their forgiveness ? Will the honour, which they preserved so pure here, be a badge of distinction there ? Yes, a fearful mark ; it will designate them as the contemners of God's authority, the opposers of his truth, the outcasts from his favour.

4. We have noticed some of the aspects in which death is viewed in anticipation. A very frequent mistake occurs in the use made of it when it has arrived, and removed a friend in its progress through our dwellings. It is considered a signal for sorrow, the instant occasion for lamentation and weeping. This has a foundation in our nature, and is promoted by the habits of our social being : grief is the first dictate of wounded affection, the first method, which it takes to relieve the full heart. But we are not children of nature ; we are Christians, and should cherish the views, hopes, and consolations of our religion. These forbid and prevent all excess of sorrow, by shewing, that it is criminal and unnecessary. Sorrow has always some portion of selfishness. If our wills were entirely submitted to the divine will, and our happiness forgotten

in the interests of others, we should not complain because we were left alone to encounter trials from which they are removed. What reason, what excuse can one, whose faith and piety are strong, plead for the loud and heavy grief in which we are sometimes called to sympathize? Is it not a virtual reproach of God's goodness? an evidence that we are more ready to be affected by what he denies, than by what he gives? Religion would tell us, that gratitude and remembrance should ever go hand in hand, and the recollection of a single blessing, which once brightened our days, should not arise, without a thankful sense of the gift. Is it not ungenerous to grieve, because those whom we loved are happier than we; because the old man has gone to his rest; the strong man, to his reward; or the infant is borne from a world of peril and sin? The blow was heavy; it severed the bonds of intimacy and dependance. Love and hope weep over the grave of a parent or child, of a husband, or wife, a brother, or friend. And is mortal love the strongest of our sentiments? Has affection no better promise than a few years of mutual discipline? Has hope no heavenly inheritance? Must she linger about the tomb, and perish with its decaying dust? The looks of despair, the throbs of anguish do not become the disciple of him, who is the resurrection and the life. If our friends have died in the midst of their iniquities, unwarned and unprepared, our tears cannot avail them; there is no purgatory from which our lamentations can deliver them. Their fate should quicken our preparation, and not retard it by exhausting sorrow. If they have died in the days of their virtue, they have gone to heaven and to God, and we may follow them. They have ceased to participate in our sufferings, that they may be partakers of Christ's glory; and they have left us the light of a good example, and the remembrance of holy affection.

5. A more dangerous notion than we have yet considered, remains. It is, that death is a time for repentance. Of all absurd and fatal impressions, there is none more irrational or destructive than this; that men will repent, when they are dying. They may grieve, may confess, may pray; but this is not repentance. Repentance corrects, purifies, amends. What evidence can the dying sinner give, that his character is changed? Of what value are vows, the sincerity of which

can never be proved. Have we not all learnt how little dependance can be placed on such promises? Of those who are rescued from the grasp of death, do not most return to their former neglect and indulgence? Is it not unusual to see a man over whom sickness has had a permanent and salutary influence? The resolutions of him, whom disease has frightened into confession, are feebler than the breath with which they are spoken. The returning smile of health dissipates them. They grow weaker with every increase of physical strength, and when the time of executing them arrives, they are forgotten. Besides, if holiness could be acquired in a week or month, in what condition are those, who have neglected to seek it? Can they throw off all worldly cares, and give their whole souls to repentance? Have they nothing to distract their minds, and to make serious reflection doubly irksome? We think little of the prudence of him, who bestows no attention on his earthly affairs, but leaves them to be settled on his death bed, and must we not condemn the rashness, the sure folly of him, who defers his concerns with eternity to a death bed, who thinks he can then have time to look over all his past delinquencies, and atone for them by tears and prayers? Few *can* find salvation on the borders of futurity. It is offered in health and youth; if we neglect it then, we may vainly sigh for it in age and sickness. Still fewer have found it lingering in the dark valley of death. Remorse, and fear, and memory, dwell there, but pardon and hope must be sought elsewhere.

Collections.

Nature of Religion.

‘Whatever definitions men have given of religion, I can find none so accurately descriptive of it as this,—that it is such a belief of the Bible as maintains a living influence on the heart. Men may speculate, criticise, dispute, doubt, or

believe the Bible. But the religious man is such, because he so believes it, as to carry habitually a practical sense of its truths on his mind.' *Cecil's Remains.*

Nature of Faith.

'Children are very early capable of impression. I imprinted on my daughter the *idea of faith* at a very early age. She was playing one day with a few beads, which seemed to delight her wonderfully. Her whole soul was absorbed in her beads. I said,—“My dear, you have some pretty beads there.”—“Yes, Papa!”—“and you seem to be vastly pleased with them.”—“Yes, Papa!”—“Well now, throw them into the fire.”—The tears started into her eyes. She looked earnestly at me, as though she ought to have a reason for so cruel a sacrifice. “Well, my dear, do as you please, but you know I never told you to do any thing, which I did not think would be good for you.”—She looked at me a few moments longer, and then, summoning up all her fortitude,—her breast heaving with the effort,—she dashed them into the fire. “Well,” said I, “there let them lie: you shall *hear more about them another time*; but say no more about them now.” Some days after I bought her a box full of larger beads, and toys of the same kind. When I returned home, I opened the treasure, and set it before her. She burst into tears with ecstasy. “Those, my child,” said I, “are your’s; because you believed me, when I told you it would be better for you to throw those two or three paltry beads behind the fire. Now that has brought you this treasure. But remember, my child, as long as you live, what *faith* is. I did all this to teach you the meaning of *faith*. You threw your beads away, when I bid you, because you had faith in me, that I never advised you but for your good. Put the same confidence in God. Believe every thing, that he says in his word.—Whether you understand it or not, have faith in Him, that He means it for your good.”’ *Ibid.*

Proselytism.

'A disinterested regard to truth should be, what it very seldom is, the most striking character in a Christian minister. His purpose should be to make proselytes to truth, and not to any thing, that may be particular in his views of it.

“Read *my books*,” says one.—“No,” says another, “read *mine*.” And thus religion is taken up by piece-meal, and the mind is diverted from its true nature, by false associations. If the teacher, whom such a man has chosen for his oracle, disgrace religion by irreligious conduct, he stumbles. He stumbles because he has not been fixed upon the sole and immoveable basis of the religion of the Bible. The mind, well instructed in the scriptures, can bear to see even its spiritual father make shipwreck of the faith, and scandalize the Gospel: but will remain itself unmoved. The man is in possession of a treasure, which, if others are foolish enough to abandon, yet they cannot detract any thing from the value, attached to it in his esteem.’ *Ibid.*

[In our last number we presented our readers with part of a correspondence between John Evelyn, Esq. and the celebrated Jeremy Taylor. It is not perhaps generally known, that this pious and eloquent prelate became obnoxious to the republican party during the period of Cromwell’s usurpation, and was actually imprisoned in Chepstow Castle in 1656, on suspicion of having instigated an insurrection in favour of his exiled king Charles II, at Salisbury. It was with reference to this calamity, that his friend Evelyn, himself a zealous royalist and devoted admirer of Taylor, addressed to him the following letter.]

To Dr. Jeremy Taylor.

‘The calamity, which lately arrived you, came to me so late, and with so much incertitude, during my long absence from these parts, that till my return and earnest inquiry, I could not be cured of my very great impatience to be satisfied concerning your condition. But so it pleased God, that when I had prepared to receive that sad news, and deplore your restraint, I was assured of your release and delivered of much sorrow. It were imprudent, and a character of much ignorance to inquire into the cause of any good man’s sufferings in these sorrowful times; yet, if I have learnt it out, ’twas not of my curiosity, but the discourse of some, with whom I have had some habitudes since my coming home. I had read the preface long since, to your “*Golden Grove* ;” (the title of a volume of Taylor’s sermons)—and I remember, and infinitely justify, all you have there asserted. ’Tis

true valour to dare to be undone ; and the consequent of truth hath ever been in danger of his teeth, and it is a blessing if men escape so in these days, when not the safeties only, but the souls of men are betrayed ; whilst such as you are rendered criminal and suffer. But you, sir, who have furnished the world with so rare precepts against the efforts of all secular disasters whatsoever, could never be destitute of those consolations, which you have so piously and so charitably prescribed to others ; yea, rather this has turned to our immense advantage, nor less to your glory, whilst men behold you living your own institutions, and preaching to us as effectually in your chains, as in the chair ; in the prison as in the pulpit. For methinks, Sir, I hear you pronounce it, as indeed you act it,—

Aude aliquid brevibus gyaris, et carcere dignum
Si vis esse aliquis—

that so your example might shame such as betray any truth for fear of men, whose mission and commission is from God. You, sir, know in the general, and I must justify in particular with infinite cognition, the benefit I have received from the truths you have delivered. I have perused that excellent book of your's on the "One Thing Needful," to my very great satisfaction and direction ; and do not doubt it shall in time gain upon all those exceptions, which I know you are not ignorant appear against it. 'Tis a great deal of courage, and a great deal of peril, even to attempt the assault of a danger so inveterate.

'False opinion knows no bottom, and reason and prescription meet in few instances ; but certainly you greatly vindicate the divine goodness, which the ignorance of men and popular mistakes have so long charged with injustice. But, sir, you must expect with patience the event, and the fruits, you contend for ; as it shall be my daily devotions for your success, who remain,

Rev. Sir, Yours, &c.'

From Dr. Taylor to John Evelyn Esq.

'HONOURED AND DEAR SIR,—Not long after my coming from my prison, I met with your kind and friendly letters, of which I was very glad, not only because they were a testi-

mony of your kindness and affection to me, but that they gave me a most welcome account of your health, and (which now-a-days is a great matter) of your liberty, and of that progression in piety, in which I do greatly rejoice. But there could not be given to me a greater and more persuasive testimony of the reality of your piety and care, than that you pass to greater degrees of caution and the love of God. It is the work of your life, and I perceive, that you betake yourself heartily to it. The God of heaven and earth prosper you and accept you !

‘I am well pleased, that you have read over my last book ; and give God thanks, that I have reason to believe that it is accepted by God, and by some good men. As to the censure of unconsenting persons, I expected it, and hope that themselves will be their own reprovers ; and truth will be assisted by God and shall prevail, when all noises and prejudices shall be ashamed. My comfort is, that I have the honour to be an advocate for God and goodness ; and that the consequent of my doctrine is, that men may speak honour of God and meanly of themselves. I have also this week been preparing some papers, in which I make it appear, that the doctrine I have published, was taught by the Fathers within the first 400 years ; and have vindicated it thus from novelty and singularity. But what I have already said, may, I hope, be sufficient to satisfy pious and prudent persons, who do not love to go *quà itur*, but *quà eundum est*.—Sir, you see what a good husband I am of my paper and ink, that I make so short returns to your most friendly letters. I pray be confident, that if there be any defect here, I will make it up in my prayers for you and in my great esteem of you, and my readiness to serve you with all the earnestness and powers of dear sir,

Your most affectionate friend,

Nov. 21, 1665.

JER. TAYLOR.’

[It appears, that the following year (1656) Dr. Taylor had again incurred suspicion, and had been committed prisoner to the Tower, for setting the picture of Christ praying, as a frontispiece to his Book of Prayers, contrary to an act, just then passed against ‘all Popish and scandalous pictures, as they were called.’ It will be remembered, that this was the period, when the church of Eng-

land, with her temporal head, had 'fled into the wilderness,' and episcopacy was regarded by the republican dissenters of the day, as an abomination. It was to intercede for his friend in prison, that Mr. Evelyn addressed the following letter]

To the Lieutenant of the Tower.

SIR,—I should begin with the greater apology for this address, did not the consideration of your great employments and my fears to importune them, carry with them an excuse, which I have hope to believe you will readily admit. But as it is an error to be troublesome to great persons upon trifling affairs, so it were no less a crime to be silent on an occasion wherein I may do an act of charity and reconcile a person to your good opinion, who has deserved so well, and who, I think, is so innocent. Sir, I speak in behalf of Dr. Taylor, of whom, I understand, you have conceived some displeasure for the mistake of his printer; and the readiest way I can think of, to do him honour, and to bring him into esteem with you, is to beg of you, that you will please to give him leave to wait upon you, that you may learn from his own mouth, as the world has already done by his writings, how averse he is from any thing, that he may be charged withal to his prejudice, and how great an adversary he has ever been to the Popish religion, against which he has employed his pen so signally, and with so much success. And when, by this favour, you shall have done justice to all interests, I am not without fair hopes, that I shall have mutually obliged you both, by doing my endeavour to serve my worthy and pious friend, and by bringing so innocent and deserving a person into your protection; who am
Yours, &c.

Greenwich, 14 Jan. 1656.

J. EVELYN.

Poetry.

ELYSIUM.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

'In the Elysium of the ancients, we find none but heroes and persons who had either been fortunate or distinguished on earth; the children, and apparently the slaves and lower classes, that is to say, Poverty, Misfortune, and Innocence, were banished to the infernal regions.'

CHATEAUBRIAND, *Génie du Christianisme*.

FAIR wert thou, in the dreams
Of elder time, thou land of glorious flowers,
And summer-winds, and low-ton'd silvery streams,
Dim with the shadows of thy laurel-bowers!

Where, as they pass'd, bright hours
Left no faint sense of parting, such as clings
To earthly love, and joy in loveliest things!

Fair wert thou, with the light
On thy blue hills and sleepy waters cast,
From purple skies ne'er deepening into night,
Yet soft, as if each moment were their last
Of glory, fading fast
Along the mountains!—but *thy* golden day
Was not as those that warn us of decay.

And ever, through thy shades,
A swell of deep Eolian sound went by,
From fountain-voices in their secret glades,
And low reed-whispers, making sweet reply
To summer's breezy sigh!
And young leaves trembling to the wind's light breath,
Which ne'er had touch'd them with a hue of death!

And the transparent sky
Rung as a dome, all thrilling to the strain
Of harps that, midst the woods, made harmony
Solemn and sweet; yet troubling not the brain
With dreams and yearnings vain,
And dim remembrances, that still draw birth
From the bewildering musick of the earth.

And who, with silent tread,
Mov'd o'er the plains of waving Asphodel?
Who, of the hosts, the night-o'erpeopling dead,

Amidst the shadowy amaranth-bowers might dwell,
 And listen to the swell
 Of those majestick hymn-notes, and inhale
 The spirit wandering in th' immortal gale ?

They of the sword, whose praise,
 With the bright wine at nations' feasts, went round !
 They of the lyre, whose unforgotten lays
 On the morn's wing had sent their mighty sound,
 And in all regions found
 Their echoes midst the mountains !—and become
 In man's deep heart, as voices of his home !

They of the daring thought !
 Daring and powerful, yet to dust allied ;
 Whose flights thro' stars, and seas, and depths had sought
 The soul's far birth-place—but without a guide !
 Sages and seers, who died,
 And left the world their high mysterious dreams,
 Born midst the olive-woods, by Grecian streams.

But they, of whose abode
 Midst her green valleys earth retain'd no trace,
 Save a flower springing from their burial-sod,
 A shade of sadness on some kindred face,
 A void and silent place
 In some sweet home ;—thou hadst no wreaths for these,
 Thou sunny land ! with all thy deathless trees.

The peasant, at his door
 Might sink to die, when vintage-feasts were spread,
 And songs on every wind !—From *thy* bright shore
 No lovelier vision floated round his head ;
 Thou wert for nobler dead !
 He heard the bounding steps which round him fell,
 And sigh'd to bid the festal sun farewell !

The slave, whose very tears
 Were a forbidden luxury, and whose breast
 Shut up the woes and burning thoughts of years,
 As in the ashes of an urn compress'd ;
 —*He* might not be thy guest !
 No gentle breathings from thy distant sky
 Came o'er *his* path, and whisper'd 'Liberty !'

Calm, on its leaf-strewn bier,
Unlike a gift of nature to decay,
Too rose-like still, too beautiful, too dear,
The child at rest before its mother lay ;
E'en so to pass away,
With its bright smile !—Elysium ! what wert *thou*,
To her, who wept o'er that young slumberer's brow ?

Thou hadst no home, green land !
For the fair creature from her bosom gone,
With life's first flowers just opening in her hand,
And all the lovely thoughts and dreams unknown,
Which in its clear eye shone
Like the spring's wakening !—But that light was past—
—Where went the dew-drop, swept before the blast ?

Not where thy soft winds play'd,
Not where thy waters lay in glassy sleep !——
Fade, with thy bowers, thou land of visions, fade !
From thee no voice came o'er the gloomy deep,
And bade man cease to weep !
Fade, with the amaranth-plain, the myrtle-grove,
Which could not yield one hope to sorrowing love !

For the most lov'd are they,
Of whom Fame speaks not with her clarion-voice
In regal halls !—the shades o'erhang their way,
The vale, with its deep fountains, is their choice,
And gentle hearts rejoice
Around their steps !—till silently they die,
As a stream shrinks from summer's burning eye.

And the world knows not then,
Not then, nor ever, what pure thoughts are fled !
Yet these are they, that on the souls of men
Come back, when night her folding veil hath spread,
The long-remember'd dead !
But not with *thee* might aught save Glory dwell—
—Fade, fade away, thou shore of Asphodel !

Review.

ART. VIII.—*The Duties of Consolation, and the Rites and Customs appropriate to Mourning.* New-Bedford, 1825. pp. 16. A. Gerrish, jr.

WE are desirous of doing something to second the suggestions of this sensible little publication. It contains opinions and reasonings, which seem to us highly interesting in themselves, and calculated to be greatly useful. That it will do any thing to change the customs to which it refers, or in any considerable measure to affect publick sentiment in relation to them, we cannot reasonably expect. For nothing is so obstinate as the long established customs of society, in matters of this kind. Fashion, which is so everlastingly mutable in trifles, becomes permanent here, and makes the wisest her unresisting slaves. It seems to many persons little short of sacrilege, to question the propriety of what the world has sanctioned for ages, or to propose the abolishing of those outward signs of respect for the dead, which all nations have made it a study to exhibit. And yet, as they had their origin in a state of barbarism, and have been generally far most imposing and excessive among semi-barbarous people ; we cannot be without the hope, that the opinions of civilized nations may be gradually enlightened, and the prescriptive standard of fashion be at length changed for that of reason and truth.

The pamphlet before us draws our attention to two points in relation to the subject of affliction and mourning. We shall do little more than follow the same train of remark. And concerning the first point, which has regard to the manner and spirit in which the duties of consolation may be discharged ; we enter fully and most heartily into the views of the writer. His hints are few, but they are powerful. They would do away that forwardness and loquacity of comforters, which is sometimes a greater burden than the sorrow itself. They would leave the pious office of consolation to near and confidential friends, from whom a few words of tenderness and sympathy are more soothing, than all the

long and formal harangues of those, who crowd to the house of sorrow, and talk because they think they must. There is a prevalent mistake in this matter. We feel strong sympathy in a neighbour's sorrow, and would do all in our power to relieve it. Our own heart prompts to it, and our religion enjoins it. We go, therefore, hastily to the sufferer, and pour out our whole stock of religious instructions and trite aphorisms, and think to drive away sorrow and bring in peace, by our much talking. The unhappy mourner is thus beset and thronged by one after another, who harass by their importunity, leave no time for his mind to become settled and calm, no leisure for that quiet and solitary devotion, which is the best of all comforters, and are thus likely to produce weariness and numbness of spirit, rather than the peace of thoughtful resignation. All this proceeds from a sad mistake, and is as ineffective to the purpose as it is common. The house of mourning is no place for any but intimate and near friends. The office of consolation is not for the indifferent and the stranger, but for those whose friendship and piety give them ready access to the troubled heart. And even such, if they would not irritate rather than heal the wound, must address themselves to it, says our author, with great discretion and delicacy, and with tender and respectful piety.

‘It is indeed a part of the discernment and delicacy that are required on these occasions, to remember that all human consolation is feeble, to be modest and unobtrusive, to refrain, in many cases, from the formal undertaking to console the sorrow, that must have way and perhaps ought to be indulged ; to *yield* for a while to the grief of the afflicted, to share rather than to check or blame it, and by assiduity rather than officiousness, by gentleness rather than loquacity, by the indirect influence of our presence and sympathy to soothe, though we cannot assuage the bitterness of grief.

‘True sympathy is *respectful*. There is nothing more venerable, in its estimation, than genuine grief—there is nothing more holy than unaffected sorrow. It is touched with awe as it enters the house of affliction, and its words are few. With the mourner, it sits down in silence, or uses the gentlest utterance of kindness. It feels instinctively, that all noise and bustle should shrink away from the presence of bereavement. True sympathy will also show a considerate respect for grief, by not urging unseasonably the topicks of religious instruction. There comes a time, indeed, when they should be brought forward and applied with godly simplicity

and faithfulness. But in the first rush and bursting of grief, the mind is not prepared for them ; it is either too much occupied or too much overcome to give them admission.'

'And if there is ever a time when cold and formal phrases of piety, dealt out as words of course, are intolerable, it must be when they are addressed to a mind, that is alive with all the sensitiveness of grief. The sympathy that is fit and useful, then, needs to be tenderly pious ; the themes, the consolations, the hopes of piety must not be strange to it ; the fortitude and reliance of piety must not be wanting to it, amidst these scenes that shake to their foundation all earthly hopes.' pp. 2—5.

To the external symbols and ceremonies of mourning, the writer makes several objections, under his second division. The first mentioned, is that of wearing mourning apparel.

'The truth is, these trappings of grief seem to me indifferent and childish, where there is real grief ; and where there is not, they are a mockery. If the mourning garb were of a coarser texture, like the ancient *sackcloth*, there might be something perhaps to plead for its intrinsic fitness ; but as it is, it differs from another garb only in colour, and gratifies the pride of appearance, the love of dress, scarcely less than any other apparel.

'But the principal objections against the custom of wearing mourning apparel, are, that it is useless, inconvenient, and expensive. For, what use does it serve ? To remind me that I am in affliction ? I do not need any such memento. To point me out to others as a mourner ? I do not wish to be so pointed out. Shall the sable garb be adopted then, because it is grateful to my feelings—because it is a kind of solace to me ? I can gain no consolation from it.

'If, then, the custom is useless, it is still more objectionable, on account of the inconvenience and expense. It is inconvenient, because it throws the care of purchasing and making clothes, upon a family, at the very moment, when on every account, it most needs seclusion and quietness,—when, worn out with care and watching and sorrow, it needs retirement and relief. That the expense presses heavily upon the poor, is a matter very well known, and I believe, generally regretted. If, then, there is a custom in the community, which is no real benefit, and is a real burden, it would seem a clear inference that it ought to be discouraged. If there be any who fear that they shall be too soon forgotten among men, when they are gone, let them be reminded that it depends upon themselves, not upon the habiliments of their friends ; upon their character, not upon their obsequies, whether they shall be remembered. "The memorial of virtue," saith the Wisdom of Solomon,

"is immortal. When it is present, men take example of it ; and when it is gone, they desire it ; it weareth a crown, and triumpheth forever." pp. 6, 7.

The argument on this point is forcible and just, commending itself to every man's sober sense and deliberate conviction. It may be said, indeed, that while any one is pleased with the thought, that he bears with him, in his mourning habit, a constant remembrance of a departed friend, which reminds both himself and others, that his affection is not forgotten,—the indulgence is innocent, perhaps salutary. As to the abuse of these external symbols, by those who comply with custom but are not mourners at heart,—it is disgusting and revolting ; yet, in truth, it does no harm, further than to give another proof, that the best and most innocent things are liable to the most unhappy abuse. When, however, we have made the exception of this one class, which is probably not a very large one, we find that the great majority are injured, rather than benefited, by the custom in question. In every case where there is a numerous family connexion, it is clear, that a large proportion are mourners only in form ; and is not the equivocation of dress in some sense a moral equivocation ? Is not every thing, done or said merely for form's sake, an injury to the moral sensibility, especially in a case of great solemnity ? They may not, indeed, think of the matter at all in this light, or give any interpretation to this act ; but is not this temptation to do a serious and significant act thoughtlessly, the occasion of great evil ? May it not extend to other cases, if allowed in one ? May we not possibly trace to this, among other causes, the strange insensibility which prevails to the most striking and meaning forms of religion ?

But to pass by this hint,—which, to pursue it properly, would require a pamphlet by itself,—other evils grow out of it, sufficiently great to prove the inexpediency of continuing this custom. Its needless expensiveness is an objection,—a consideration which has much to do with the comfort of life, and not a little with its morality. In many circles, indeed, this is a matter of trifling moment ; but far otherwise with the majority. And why in any case, should a family, in all its branches, at the house of heavy bereavement, be distracted and hurried with the preparations of dress, and the gloomy chamber of death be turned into a busy workshop, and made

to resound with the shocking frivolity of talk about mourning ornaments and becoming weeds? Why should the soul, which God has called to prayer, be summoned away to these unnecessary thoughts about the body? Why should the profitable meditation on death and eternity be interrupted,—when, perhaps, it was just beginning to work the regeneration of the immortal spirit—by these ill-timed services for time and fashion? These questions belong to all cases; there are others in which we should ask further, why to the load of grief should be added that of debt? When the worthy man, whose utmost industry in his calling but affords a decent competence, has been bowed down by the stroke of God's afflictive providence, why should there be added to this trouble a sudden expense, which shall straiten and harass him for years,—which shall fill him with such anxiety to pay his debt, that he loses all the profit of the affliction, and its whole purpose to his soul is defeated. The custom goes down to the poorest in society; and they must beg or borrow 'respectable mourning,' who are in the extremity of want; who need, greatly and pressingly, both the instructions and consolations of affliction, but are rendered unable to receive either, by having all their time, care, and ingenuity, absorbed in the search after, and the talking about, crape veils and new shoes; whereby their vanity, perhaps, is fed, while their graces are unimproved. It is, indeed, a general objection to this custom, that it tends to promote a foolish and extravagant vanity. That most ridiculous of all classes of pride, the pride of personal appearance, is nourished by it. The gracefulness of costume gives a complacency, which stills the sobs, that ought to have been hushed by religion; and many, who under other circumstances, might have been thinking of serious things, are tempted to think only of themselves.

There is great objection, on this ground, to ever putting a mourning dress upon children. It is to them but a new dress, with an extraordinary opportunity to exhibit it; and they generally hear so much about its being 'becoming,' that they very naturally think its exhibition to be one chief object. And why should we thus turn an opportunity for the most useful impressions, into an occasion for cherishing a pernicious vanity? A child's grief at longest, is short; why hasten its removal by this needless display of unaccustomed

garments, which it can look upon only as new finery? Why turn the little one's thoughts from its mother's love, and its mother's coffin, to look around for admiration at its new apparel? We would protest, in strong terms, against this idle and preposterous custom. It can do no possible good, it certainly does harm. It is bad enough to train up our children to vanity in the ball-room, and at the tea party; let us cease to profane our funerals to the same purpose. It is disgusting enough to observe the conscious look of gratified self-love, with which little girls and boys wear their new dresses of scarlet, and white, and purple; but to see their melancholy weeds worn with the same air, and displayed for admiration,—there are no words to express the sense of revolting; and one would suppose the very possibility of such a scene, would be sufficient to prevent any friend from ever corrupting, in this way, the simplicity of childhood.

We beg that in these remarks, and in all which we make upon these subjects, we may not be misunderstood. We speak freely, but would not needlessly wound any one's feelings. We know that we are upon a delicate topick, and that many in the tenderness of their grief, would receive a proposal to lay by their mourning, or even to refuse it to their children, as a proposal to insult the memory of the dead, and profane the place of their rest. They are influenced by universal example, and with the best and purest feelings hold this usage sacred. We would not treat their feelings or their conduct with other than sincerest respect. It is not against them that our remarks are directed; and if the time could ever come, when none such should be among the recently bereaved, we would hold our peace for their sakes till that day. But sacred as their feelings are, he who considers the matter without prejudice, will see that they are founded on notions and customs, which cannot be defended, and which, however innocent to many, are to many also mischievous. These mischiefs we would expose; and though we do it with the apprehension, that we may wound some spirits, which we would rather soothe, we are at the same time encouraged by the persuasion, that 'if their early impressions are against us, the natural sentiments of all are in our favour.' It is the prevalence of these 'natural sentiments,' that we desire. If

they could be restored, we should think much gained to the cause of religion, and to the true consolation of the troubled.

The next custom, on which our author remarks, is that of publicly asking the prayers of the congregation for the afflicted, by name. This, he contends, is useless, since the afflicted are always remembered of course in the prayers of God's house, and would be so peculiarly, when the minister should know of cases, which peculiarly demand it. He thinks it worse than useless,—oftentimes a mere form,—embarrassing to the mourners, and wearisome to the congregation, and not seldom perplexing to the minister.

There undoubtedly is ground for these objections; but they seem to be directed against the abuse of what in itself is a laudable expression of religious feeling. 'Properly viewed,' some one has said, 'notes are requests of one in a religious fraternity for the intercessions of the rest, and may be, and I hope are, made a help to piety and brotherly love.' They are sometimes merely formal, and offered by those who never come to church for any other purpose than to offer them; and they are sometimes tediously dwelt upon in a too particular and prolix enumeration in the prayer. But have we not reason to think that the great majority present them from a sense of religious duty, and with a religious sentiment? Do they not, on account of them, take a deeper interest in the devotion of the sanctuary, and esteem themselves more responsible for their attention to that service? And since all are more affected by what is direct and personal, than by what is general and abstract, may we not suppose that the congregation, especially friends, will join with stronger devotion in those supplications, which concern individuals, than in the unapplied intercessions for the sons and daughters of affliction? It seems to be an evidence of this, that the congregation is perceptibly hushed to a profounder stillness at this portion of the service. Devout and benevolent emotions may in this way be excited and cherished, which otherwise might not have existed. We should be slow therefore to abolish a custom, notwithstanding its acknowledged inconveniences, which yet is associated with long established sentiments of piety, and which unquestionably ministers to the spiritual peace and improvement of many. We feel the force of objections; and yet should be

unwilling to lose one of the few forms, which exist amongst us, of a personal acknowledgment of dependance on God and religious obligation.

The writer next adverts to the custom of preaching funeral sermons,—a custom, which we believe is disappearing, and which it is astonishing should have existed so long and so generally; though the circumstances of our early ancestors are rightly said by our author, to account satisfactorily for its introduction. Some ministers have been in the habit of writing occasional sermons on account of every death among their people; and what has been the consequence?

‘These discourses, where they are frequent and common, do become intolerably tedious to the people who hear them. I have formerly had some opportunities for observation, and I never have known any congregations in which the subject of death was so utterly wearisome, nor any assemblies over which it spread such a lethargick dulness, as those, which are frequently called to listen to funeral addresses and funeral sermons. The truth is, that the topicks of the preacher,—unless he resorts to giving the characters of the deceased, a resort not to be thought of,—the topicks of the preacher on these occasions are very few; and solemn as they are, they may be,—they must be worn out by constant repetition. And the solemnity and importance of the subjects in question, make this result all the more lamentable.’ p. 11.

We should say with our author, that the giving of characters is a ‘resort not to be thought of.’ But in fact it has been thought of but too often. It has been with some preachers a habit. The consequences have been such as might be expected. Something must be said of every adult who has died; and in care to avoid wounding the feelings of bereaved friends, that something must be favourable and kind. Thus the dignity, and not seldom the veracity of the pulpit has been sacrificed, and the voice of human adulation and indiscriminate eulogy been suffered to profane that holy place, which should be sacred to virtue and truth. And after all, as many mourning friends have been offended and scandalized, as have been gratified or improved. We think that the characters of the deceased should be most rarely touched in a sermon. A minister is of all men the least likely to know the true character, or at any rate the whole character, of his parishioners; and in his honest friendship may eulogize those who deserve no praise, and, through mere ignorance of what

every body knows but himself, be thought to prostitute his pulpit to worldly purposes, or from unworthy motives. There are some rare cases in which eminent excellence should be praised,—better among the obscure, than among the elevated and affluent. It is well to avoid the appearance of evil. It is well to throw off the reproach from Christ's ministers of courting the worldly and great. We think that there is danger of error too in sermons at the funeral of ministers. Why should they always be panegyrical of the dead? Why not rather admonitory to the living? Why should preachers be forever found pouring out praises at the tombs of their brethren?

We recommend the following paragraph to the most attentive consideration of ministers, and to the candid perusal of people. It contains the substance of the maxims which should guide all preachers in their ordinary duties, so far as relates to the present subject.

‘The most unexceptionable rule for a clergyman, if I might be permitted to suggest one, would seem to be this ;—to take into the account the cases of affliction in his parish, as he does other circumstances, and to let them, in common with others, guide his preaching. He may be sure, that the most of his hearers, unless under the influence of strong prejudices, do not wish to be *noticed* by a sermon especially adapted to their case. The subjects of frailty and death, of affliction and bereavement, will of course have an important place in his instructions and exhortations. He will consider it as a part of his office to comfort and to profit those that mourn. He will often introduce reflections for these purposes, incidentally,—and sometimes in full discourses. He will see the propriety and feel the desire of doing this, soon after any instance or instances of mortality, that may call any of the congregation to mourning and sorrow. When an afflicted family enters the sanctuary for the first time after their bereavement, he will naturally wish, though he may not always be able to gratify his feelings, to introduce some subject of discourse, which will be grateful and consoling, or profitable to them. And many in affliction will perceive this to be a more delicate and truly kind attention to them, than any more direct and formal notice.—The general practice here recommended will save a clergyman from many suspicions and jealousies of those around him, the bereaved from many pains and agitations, and the body of the congregation from much weariness and dissatisfaction in divine service. Death will be a more solemn subject; while with the parade and the declamation, will pass

away a portion of the stupid unconcern and morbid superstition that now attaches to it.' pp. 11, 12.

Concerning 'the mode of celebrating funerals,' our author has said a few things, to which we feel inclined to offer some slight objections, while we fully acknowledge the justice of his general remarks. He speaks most particularly of the inexpediency of making long addresses at the house of mourning, and makes the following observations, which we earnestly wish might be pondered and felt in all their power, by those who fancy that a minister neither sympathizes with sorrow, nor cares for souls, because he is silent,—when his silence in truth may proceed from the very opposite cause. A man who is cold and at ease, may easily make a formal harangue. Deep feeling may render him dumb. But our author says it better than we can.

'Besides, how feeble are all such exhortations, compared with the actual scene! Why should we not sometimes pause, and listen to the voice of God? When he sends death among us, it becomes us in the presence of such a teacher to be silent and thoughtful, or to break the stillness of the house into which death has entered, only with the voice of supplication. We want not then, to hear the harangue of a feeble man, when the presence of the dead fills us with awe beyond all that man can awaken. It is true, we must be allowed to have our different impressions; and taking this liberty, I must acknowledge that I can enter into the feelings of a clergyman, who finds himself almost unable to open his lips amidst these solemnities, while the sighs of affliction reach his ear, and the remains of mortality are before him, and it seems as if the sense of mortal infirmity must press upon every heart. I have felt as if no words could find utterance but the words of prayer,—none but the cry of our weakness to Almighty God, but the supplication of the frail and the dying to the Father of life.' p. 13.

We think it is stated too strongly in the paragraph following this, that the only valuable purpose for which we visit the house of mourning is to comfort the afflicted, and that there is something of selfishness in going for our own improvement. Not to dwell upon this, however, we must be permitted to present to our readers one further extract, with the strong feeling and truth of which we wish they might be deeply impressed. After saying, that 'we go to the house of affliction to testify our respect and sympathy, to comfort those who mourn;' he proceeds:

‘ And yet one cannot but observe how little this great leading object is kept in view in the funeral customs that prevail generally throughout New-England. I desire that they may be surveyed, for one moment, in this light. On the event of death,—at a time when the mind and body are prostrated with the burden that is laid on them, when the feelings demand seclusion, and stillness, and freedom from all care and disturbance,—at such a time, it is, that there commences a scene of labour, toil and confusion;—mourning apparel is to be made; and the dwelling, that should be still and solemn, is to be prepared for an assembly, and crowd, such as it never witnesses on any other occasion, and such as really conduces to no purpose either of consolation or improvement. At length, the hour of funeral rites arrives; long services are held in the presence of those who are already exhausted and overcome with their sufferings; perhaps, they are addressed with many representations of the greatness of their calamity; they are told that they will never see their friends more; they are agonized with full and particular descriptions of their loss, or are told that they must submit and bow to the dispensation, though they are already smitten to the dust: and, then, as if to consummate their anguish, there is a scene witnessed,—of which I scarcely know in what terms to speak:—if there ever is a time when we should wish to be alone, or only in the presence of the most intimate friends, it is when we take leave of the remains of what is dearest on earth; when we look for the last time and shed the last tears on the forms of those that we have loved. And yet these sacred yearnings of bereaved affection are made a ceremony and a spectacle for the world to gaze upon!’ p. 15.

The great cause of all these painful and strange usages, is to be found in the custom of publick burials, at which friends, relations, and neighbours are expected to attend. All the rest will fall, when this shall have been abolished. We should regard the abolition of this as the beginning of a most important reformation; and we think that signal gratitude is due to those consistent and independent men, who have done so much in this city to introduce private funerals. We trust that the custom will by and bye become universal, and that the house of mourning will cease to be made common to the intrusion of all, and thrown open to the bustle and disturbance of a mixed multitude. We trust that it will ere long be considered as a sacred retreat,—where tears may be shed and friends commune, without interruption or restraint; and from which the bereaved may follow their beloved, in company with the few who truly sympathize, un-

oppressed by the heartless gaze and rude voices of the many, who come together without care for the dead or tenderness for the living.

We do not know of one good effect of publick funerals, which can avail any thing to compensate for the evil they do by distressing the mourners, and hardening the publick heart. That they distress the mourners, who does not at once perceive? For is it not 'to invade the silence and disturb the tranquillity of sorrow, and lay burdens on its weakness and exhaustion?' That they harden the publick heart, who can doubt that has witnessed that most heartless and unfeeling of all spectacles, a publick funeral in a populous city? Even those who attend from personal or official regard, are too ready in the crowd and parade to think and speak of any subject rather than the occasion, or the topics which it might be supposed to suggest. They attend with the same feelings with which they attend any other crowd or spectacle. The multitude also, with the same feelings, throngs the procession; and women and children gaze at the splendid array and funereal decorations, with no more melancholy than they look upon the triumphant march of the fourth of July procession. It is most evident to all who have mingled in the scene. And what is the consequence? Men learn to think of death and its solemn associations with a brutal indifference and 'stupid unconcern.' The moral influence is injurious. The feelings are rendered hard and callous. Death ceases to be that stern monitor and powerful teacher that he was designed to be, and his most eloquent appeals address themselves to minds, which habit has hardened, and serve only to harden them the more.

What is thus true to the full extent of the large parades, with which publick personages are attended to the tomb, is equally true to a certain extent of the publick funerals of private individuals. Their moral impression is bad. Men return from them less affected than when they went. They talk over the news of the day, and indulge their worldly speculations, in the very presence of the cold body of their departed fellow mortal; and they converse, sometimes not in whispers, as they walk in the procession, of those ordinary concerns, the thought of which death and the grave ought to have banished for a while. These things are so,—they will

be so,—and what can compensate for the moral sensibility which is thus destroyed? for the triumph of worldliness and selfishness, over the lessons of mortality and the warnings of God, which is thus promoted?—The evil does not end here. One might expect that the near mourners, the most deeply afflicted, would be interrupted by no wrong feelings, though they might be harassed by the presence of the throng. But, alas, it is not so. There is an order to be observed, and a precedence to be given, and the jealous spirit of place and priority comes in to agitate and inflame those bosoms, which are yet heaving with the sobs of grief. How often are affronts given and received at the burial of friends! How many bitter words are uttered, how many hard thoughts and revengeful passions indulged, how many irreconcilable enmities made! This jealousy, also, takes another and still more unhappy turn. The minister is watched to see that he does due honour to the deceased, and takes sufficient notice of the relatives. This would not be, if it were all in private. But now it is a publick exhibition; and what should be listened to, as the most solemn of all services—the humble supplication of the dying in the presence of the dead,—is too often turned into an occasion of vainglorying and self-importance; followed by ill-natured remarks on the omissions of the minister, or loud commendations of his performance, equally disgusting and profane. And all this followed by much gossip, which may well be expected to do away whatever serious impression may have been made.

But enough of this; we are glad to quit the ungrateful theme. The evils which exist are great and trying, and they ought to be cured. Feeling them as we do, we were not willing to pass by so favourable an opportunity to say a few hasty words on the subject, and to recommend this little work to serious perusal. We trust that it will lead many to think, and we hope that those who think, will act. Let them begin by striking at the root of the evil, in relieving themselves from the pain and burden of publick funerals. And further,—to conclude with the words of the publication before us,—

‘If any one is persuaded of the inexpediency of wearing mourning apparel, if he knows that the poor are often brought to distress by this expense, and sometimes to the debtors’ prison, he ought,

except in extraordinary circumstances, to lend his example to the suppression of this custom ; and further—if any one shrinks from long funeral services and funeral sermons, let him propose to his minister to forego these customary marks of publick attention, and I am satisfied that in most cases, his proposal will be heartily accepted and commended. The bonds of custom are strong, but they are not too strong for good sense and the power of conscience to break asunder.'

ART. IX.—*Proofs that the Common Theories and Modes of Reasoning respecting the Depravity of Mankind, exhibit it as a Physical Attribute ; with a View of the Scriptural Doctrine relative to the Nature and Character of Man, as a Moral Agent.* New York, 1824.

2. *Views of Theology. No. III. President Edwards' Doctrine of Original Sin, the Doctrine of Physical Depravity.* New York, 1825.

THESE two pamphlets are the first and third in a series, now issuing from the New York press, under the general title of 'Views of Theology.' We are wholly ignorant of their author, even of his name ; but should judge, from the language, which he uses on some subjects, that he must be a disciple of the old Arminian school. However this may be, it is certain, that the pamphlets in question have been strangely overlooked and neglected, in this quarter, considering their great merit ; and we sincerely hope, that the notice, which we are about to take of them, may do something to extend their circulation.

It will be seen from the titlepages, that their object is the same, in effect, with that, which has been repeatedly brought before our readers ; especially in Professor Norton's *Views of Calvinism*. We are glad to meet with so able an ally in so good a cause, and the more so that he is not a Unitarian ; as it proves, that Christians of other denominations, whose minds cannot be suspected of the same biasses, are beginning to regard, as we do, the distinguishing doctrines of reputed orthodoxy. It proves that all, who are not bound to this system by interest or prejudice, though viewing it from a

great variety of positions, and under a great variety of aspects, do yet entertain but one opinion of it. We are glad, also, of an occasion for recurring to this subject, as we believe the time has come, when to induce men to abandon Calvinism, little more is necessary, than to make them acquainted with what Calvinism is. Of the multitudes, who have lived and died, supposing themselves Calvinists, how many would have revolted at the system they were understood to hold, had they taken the trouble to consider the meaning of the words put into their mouths by their spiritual guides?

The first of the pamphlets, mentioned above, begins with our author's 'Proofs, that the common Theories and Modes of Reasoning respecting the Depravity of Mankind exhibit it as a Physical Attribute.' These he gives in large and numerous citations from the most approved orthodox writers, ancient and modern; and some idea may be formed of the manner, in which this fair and able exposition is conducted, from the concluding paragraph, which contains a summary of the whole.

'Such are some of the modes in which, it is believed, the doctrine of a physical depravity is taught. It is now time to pause, and cast the eye back over the ground which has been traversed, and collect the result. It has been seen, that the depravity of mankind is represented as an attribute of nature, in distinction from actions; as existing in the mind antecedently to its exercising any actions; and as being the cause that all its moral exercises are sinful,—as being conveyed from parents to children by propagation, in the same manner as other constitutional properties; as consisting in a want of adaptation in the powers of the soul to that class of exercises, which are morally excellent; and consequently, as being such, that it renders men utterly incapable of holiness; such that no moral influence has any power or tendency to lead them to it; and finally such, that it is by producing a change in their physical constitution, that the Spirit of God fits them for acting in conformity to the divine will. What then is the result? Can any doubt remain that those who make these representations, inculcate the existence of a *physical* depravity? Can it be, after all this, that the idea that such a doctrine is taught is a mere allusion?—a gratuitous freak of the imagination? What can be required to make out a demonstration that such a doctrine is inculcated? Declarations,—which according to the just meaning of language, *must* denote such a doctrine? The passages quoted contain an abundance of such. Formal definitions,—which if any

regard is had to the proper force of their terms, to the great principles on which they rest, or to the results which they authorize, *cut off the possibility* of their involving any other meaning? The reader has been presented with a multiplicity of such. Arguments,—whose whole *force* and *propriety* depend on the *existence* of such a depravity? Such is the character of the great mass of the reasoning, which has been employed on the subject by the theological world, for nearly three hundred years, to say nothing of what prevailed antecedently?' pp. 40, 41.

Then follow our author's objections to the doctrine of a physical depravity, as taught by the orthodox; and afterwards his own views on the subject in discussion, of which we shall say nothing here, as we shall have occasion to revert to them in the sequel.

The remaining pamphlet is wholly occupied by an ingenious, lucid, and in our view perfectly satisfactory argument, to prove that the doctrine of Physical Depravity, which he had before shown to be taught by the orthodox writers generally, is also advanced and defended in Edwards' celebrated treatise on Original Sin. He was induced to undertake this in refutation of an article on this subject, which appeared in the *Christian Spectator* for November last, over the signature of T. R.—a paper to which we may have occasion to refer frequently as we proceed. We shall now aim to give as clear and succinct an account, as possible, of the argument in this pamphlet, dwelling and enlarging only on those points, which have been contested and denied by late writers, and especially by the conductors of the journal just named. Our author justly observes;

'The inquiry respecting Edwards' views on that topick—[the doctrine of a physical depravity] in which his philosophy as well as theology is deeply concerned, were highly interesting, if contemplated in no other reference than to his distinguished talents and reputation; but is rendered by recent controversy, and by its bearing on the theology of the present day, of uncommon consequence, and seems destined by the decisions in which it shall terminate to exert an important influence on the interests of religion. The doctrine of Edwards,—whatever it may be thought to be,—is undoubtedly, in its most essential features, still generally held by the clergy and churches. The controversy respecting it is consequently scarcely less concerned with their doctrine than his, and the judgment which shall be generally formed in regard to

its truth or erroneousness must necessarily go far toward determining whether it shall continue to be held and inculcated as the doctrine of Revelation, or yield to the prevalence of other and essentially different views. It claims therefore, and must, it is believed, sooner or later engage the attention of the religious publick, and merits the most serious, enlightened, and impartial consideration.' pp. 3, 4.

To the same effect, also, the writer in the *Christian Spectator*; 'It must be confessed,' says he, 'that the work of Edwards has been held in such high repute by this class of Christians, [the orthodox] and has been so often appealed to by them as a triumphant defence of their opinions, that the point at issue chiefly depends on what is the real doctrine maintained in this celebrated treatise.'*

It adds further to the interest and importance of this discussion, that it turns on a question, which is confessedly a vital question. If it can be shown, that the doctrine of physical depravity is a part of Calvinism, we presume that most, if not all, of the respectable modern advocates of that system will acknowledge, that the controversy is at an end.

The writer in the *Christian Spectator* says, in immediate connexion with the passage last quoted; 'The doctrine of Physical Depravity, I understand to be this; *that there is con-created with man a substantial property or attribute of his nature, which is in itself sinful, and deserving punishment.*' Substantially the same definition is also given by our author;

'A physical depravity of the soul is of course a physical attribute, a created attribute of its substance, inhering in, and contributing to make up its nature and constitute it what it is, and is as distinct, therefore, from all its operations and all external relations, circumstances, and objects, as is the soul itself, and as independent of all those operations and objects for its existence and nature.

'The physical depravity predicated of the soul consists, according to the lowest representation of it, in the soul's being of such a nature that it is wholly adapted and prone to sin, in such a manner that its own constitution and attributes necessarily cause it to sin in all its moral actions, and render it incompetent to exert any other kind of agency. In addition however to this, it is perhaps always implied, and Edwards and many others, especially of those who preceded him, expressly represent that it is *sinful* in being of

* *Christian Spectator*, Vol. VI. 567.

such a nature and *deserving of punishment*, in the same sense as it is for exerting sinful actions; and the doctrine will in the present discussion be considered as including this representation.' p. 6.

That Edwards taught this doctrine, or any thing like it, the writer in the *Christian Spectator* resolutely denies; affirming that the whole object of that distinguished controversialist in his treatise on Original Sin, was to establish this simple proposition, 'That there is "*something concerned in bringing sin to pass*, which is the foundation of its constancy, or strong prevailing probability, but which is still *not an essential attribute of man's nature*,"—so that "it is perfectly consistent with *his* notion of tendency to sin, that it should depend on man's external circumstances, and wholly cease by a change in these circumstances."'* Just the reverse of this is, however, proved to be the fact, in the pamphlet before us; in which Edwards is shown to exhibit the original sin he ascribes to mankind as a physical depravity, and that not in a few scattered passages merely, but uniformly throughout his work.

1. He presents to us that doctrine in his *definitions* of Original Sin.

To establish this position, our author adduces the definitions with which Edwards commences his Treatise, where

'He represents original sin as a "*depravity*" and "*corruption of nature*,"—as a *created depravity*, designating it as "*innate*" and "*prior*" to actions—as *the cause that men exert sinful actions*, exhibiting them as its effects, and inferring from them its existence, and finally as a *blamable depravity*, denominating it "*moral*," "*sinful*," "*evil and pernicious*." One would imagine these quotations alone were sufficient to decide the controversy respecting his views, if his definitions and statements are to have any influence on the decision. No one surely can persuade himself that in their most obvious meaning they teach the doctrine which T. R. ascribes to him, nor that it is credible that had he designed to define that doctrine, he would have selected such terms to express it.' p. 10.

2. His *statement of his object, and plan of argument*, afford similar evidence that his doctrine is that of physical depravity.

* *Christian Spectator*, pp. 568, 569.

The following is the plan of his work, to which he rigidly adheres. First, he undertakes to prove the proposition, 'that mankind are all naturally in such a state, that they universally run themselves into sin;' then from this fact he *infers*, 'that the natural state of the mind of man is attended with a propensity of *nature*, which is *prevalent* and *effectual* to such an issue;' and supposing *this* inference to be established, he proceeds, in the third place, to deduce from it, and demonstrate *another*, namely, that 'their *nature* is *corrupt* and *depraved* with a *moral depravity*.*' Now, our author contends, if language has any meaning, the formal and definite exposition, which Edwards here gives of his design and plan of executing it, makes it as certain, as any declaration from him could, that it was his object to demonstrate the doctrine of physical depravity.

'What for example can his two inferences mean, if according to T. R.'s representation it was not his design to teach that the physical nature of man is depraved, but only that there is "something concerned in bringing sin to pass which is not an essential attribute of man's nature," but depends "wholly" on his "external circumstances?"' Propose to prove from the fact that all men sin, that *their nature is the cause* of their sinning, and then from that fact that "*their nature*" itself "*is corrupt and depraved with a moral depravity*," and yet after all neither believe nor design to prove either of these, but precisely the opposite position, that the cause concerned in bringing sin to pass is *wholly external to their nature*! Does such a course accord with the perspicacity and logical accuracy of Edwards?' p. 12.

3. He exhibits the same views in his representations respecting *tendency to sin*. It will be remembered that the writer in the Christian Spectator maintains it to be 'perfectly consistent with Edwards' notion of tendency to sin, that it should depend on man's *external circumstances*, and *wholly* cease by a change in these circumstances.' By comparing this assertion with the following extracts, the reader will be able to judge, how much reliance is to be placed on the statements and reasonings on this subject, with which we have been favoured abundantly by the writers in that journal.

* Edwards' Works Vol. VI. p. 137.

Edwards, who must certainly be supposed to understand his own doctrine, says expressly :

‘It is manifest that this tendency, which has been proved, does NOT consist in any particular *external circumstances* that some or many are in, peculiarly tempting or influencing their minds, but is INHERENT, and is *seated* in that NATURE which is common to all mankind, which they carry with them wherever they go, and still remains the same, *however* circumstances may *differ*. For it is implied in what has been proved, and shown to be confessed, that the same event comes to pass in *all* circumstances that any of mankind *ever are* or CAN BE under, in the world.’*

And, as if this had not been sufficiently explicit and decisive, he adds in the next paragraph :

‘We have the same evidence that the propensity in this case lies in *the nature* of the subject, and does not arise from any particular *circumstances*, as we have in any case whatsoever, which is only by the effects appearing to be the same in all changes of time and place, and under all varieties of circumstances. It is in this way only we judge that *any* propensities, which we observe in mankind are such as are seated in their *nature* in all other cases. It is thus we judge of the mutual propensity betwixt the sexes, or of the dispositions which are exercised in any of the natural passions or appetites, that they truly belong to the nature of man, because they are observed in mankind in general through all countries, nations, and ages, and in all conditions.’

Fearing, however, as it would seem, that some might believe, with him, in a universal tendency to sin, and also that this universal tendency cannot ‘lie in any distinguishing circumstances of any particular people, person, or age,’ and yet think to *evade* ‘his notion’ of this tendency, by referring it to ‘the general frame and constitution of this world,’—he proceeds in what remains of this section to expose, as he conceives, the fallacy of this assumption. He contends, in the first place, that this ‘evasion’ might be resorted to as well in regard to those tendencies acknowledged by all to be innate, inherent, and concreated, and therefore in every proper sense of the word, physical or substantial properties. ‘Propensities are no propensities,’ he allows, ‘any otherwise than as taken with their objects :’ that is to say, they must not only be pro-

* Edwards' Works, Vol. VI. p. 149.

propensities *of* something, but propensities *to* something. But because the propensity or inclination, in question, supposes some object, this does not prevent, in Edwards' view of the subject, that the propensity or inclination, in itself considered, should depend wholly on the physical constitution of the particular nature to which it appertains, and, if so be, strictly speaking a physical attribute or property of that nature; especially as he is speaking in this chapter of the propensity or inclination, not as it appears in its exercises, but as it exists 'prior' to such exercises. This hypothesis is an 'evasion,' because it states the fact in such a way as to evade the real question in dispute, and therefore, so far as this question is concerned, 'it alters not the case.' It does indeed suppose that this tendency to sin lies in the general constitution and frame of the world; but this does not interfere with the doctrine that it results immediately and directly from what man's nature is in itself, considered as *a part* of this general frame and constitution of the world. So that even if this supposition were adopted, it would not follow, as T. R. would have it inferred, that this tendency depends for its proximate or efficient cause on any thing *external* in the general frame and constitution of the world, but it ought still be understood to depend on what the soul is in itself, and consequently be regarded as an essential and substantial property of the soul.

Besides, Edwards maintains that even if this evasion could be shown to have any weight in this controversy, it would not answer the purposes of his opponents. It would still be 'exactly the same thing' as to the effect it should have on our views of God's moral perfections, whether we suppose him to have 'so ordered it, that this propensity should be in his [man's] nature *considered alone*,' the doctrine advanced by Edwards, 'or with relation to its situation in the universe, and its connexion with other parts of the system to which the Creator has united it.' 'If so,' he concludes, 'there can be *no room* for such an evasion of the evidency from fact, of the universal, infallible tendency of man's nature to sin and eternal perdition, as that the tendency there is to this issue, *does not lie in man's nature*, BUT in the general constitution and frame of this earthly world, which God hath made to be the habitation of mankind.'

4. These views of Edwards' doctrine are confirmed by his representation of the change, which he supposes was wrought in the nature of man in consequence of the *Fall*.

On this topick the writer in the Christian Spectator uses the following strong and confident expressions :

' Edwards unequivocally *denies* that any such property or attribute as the doctrine of physical depravity asserts, belongs to the nature of man. This he does when he asserts that the only guilt which belongs to man on his first existence, is the imputed guilt of Adam's sin. But what makes it still more strange that any reader of his treatise should ascribe such a doctrine to Edwards is, that he has formally and explicitly stated it as an objection to his doctrine, and denied that it either belongs to his doctrine or can be inferred from it. Nor is this all. He is very explicit in unfolding his views of what the propensity or tendency to sin in man is, and whence it arises, and in this way showing that it is not and cannot be a physical attribute of human nature.'

T. R. appears to have been led into this error by misunderstanding Edwards' object in that section of his work, in which he professes to give an ' account how total corruption of heart should follow on man's eating the forbidden fruit, though that was but one act of sin, *without* God's *putting* any evil into his heart, or *implanting* any bad principle, or *infusing* any corrupt taint, and *so* becoming the author of depravity.'* It was no part of his design in this section to *deny* that man's nature in consequence of the fall has become corrupt in itself from his first existence, with ' a total native depravity ;' for this he expressly reasserts in this very connexion. His object, therefore, was not to deny that this depravity is a physical depravity, consisting in the very frame and constitution of our nature, as it has now become ; but to account for its becoming so, that is, to account for the introduction of this physical depravity, at the fall, without supposing any thing *added to* our nature at that time, but *merely* something *taken away*. ' *Only God's withdrawing,*' says he, ' as it was highly proper and necessary that he should, from rebel man, and men's natural principles *being left to themselves*, this is sufficient to account for his becoming *entirely corrupt* and bent on sinning against God.'

* Edwards' Works, Vol. VI, 430, 431.

Edwards appears to have plumed himself not a little on his distinction between a *positive* and a *privative* cause,—with how much reason it does not belong to this inquiry to determine. It is only necessary to show that it does not lead him into the inconsistency, charged upon him by T. R., of expressly denying here, what he had as expressly asserted so many times in other parts of the same treatise. We will give his theory in his own words :

‘The case with man was plainly this : When God made man at first, he implanted in him two kinds of principles. There was an *inferior* kind, which may be called *natural*, being the principles of mere human nature, such as self-love, with those natural appetites and passions which belong to the nature of man, in which his love to his own liberty, honour, and pleasure were exercised. These when alone and left to themselves are what the scriptures sometimes call *flesh*. Besides these there were superior principles that were spiritual, holy, and divine, summarily comprehended in divine love, wherein consisted the spiritual image of God, and man’s righteousness and true holiness, which are called in scripture *the divine nature*. These principles may in some sense be called *super-natural*, being (however concreated or connate, yet) such as are above those principles that are essentially implied in, or necessarily resulting from, and inseparably connected with mere human nature, and being such as immediately depend on man’s union and communion with God, or divine communications and influences of God’s spirit, which though withdrawn and man’s nature forsaken of these principles, human nature would be human nature still, man’s nature as such being entire without these divine principles which the scriptures sometimes call *spirit*, in contradistinction to *flesh*. When man sinned and broke God’s covenant and fell under his curse, these superior principles left his heart. For indeed God then left him : That communion with God on which these principles depended entirely ceased, the Holy Spirit, that divine inhabitant, forsook the house. Because it would have been utterly improper in itself and inconsistent with the covenant and constitution God had established, that God should still maintain communion with man, and continue by his friendly gracious vital influences to dwell with him and in him after he was become a rebel, and had incurred God’s wrath and curse. Therefore immediately the superior divine principles wholly ceased ; so light ceases in a room when the candle is withdrawn, and thus man was left in a state of darkness, woful corruption and ruin, nothing but flesh without spirit.

This is Edwards' theory of the fall. The reader will perceive that he represents the change in which it consisted, as a change simply of man's physical nature. He says nothing whatever of any alteration in his external circumstances, nor intimates that they had any agency in giving it being; but describes it as produced entirely by a change wrought in his physical constitution: to wit, by the withdrawing from his nature of an important portion of the physical attributes, denominated superior principles, with which it was originally endowed. Human nature, as left after the subtraction of these superior principles, he pronounces wholly corrupt; corrupt in itself; corrupt not from any influence of circumstances or temptation, nor because of its own voluntary exercises, nor *in* those exercises, but prior to such exercises; corrupt in its very constitution. This point is pressed with great force and ingenuity in the pamphlet before us.

‘He exhibits the remaining portion of man's nature as left by the eradication of those superior attributes in a corrupt state,—or in other words, as being on their extinction,—from its consisting of only such attributes as it did,—in itself, of course, and necessarily corrupt. His representation is, “that corruption of nature came on Adam” by “*the absence*” of those attributes and *the “leaving”* of his inferior principles without their “government,”—and that directly, not by the intervention of some *subsequent cause*. It was corrupt in being such as it was left on the extinction of those superior attributes, just as a room is darkened “when the candle is withdrawn,” or a body corrupted by the extinction of life,—not by subsequently *corrupting itself* in consequence of its being left such, nor by being corrupted by something *external* to itself. He not only gives no intimation whatever that the latter was the mode of its becoming corrupt, but his representation entirely precludes the ascription to him of such a meaning. His language is that the state itself in which he “was left,” was “a state of darkness, woful corruption, and ruin,”—not that *in consequence* of his being left such as he was he *afterwards* became involved in such a state by the intervention of some other cause,—that “*only* God's withdrawing and man's natural principles being left to themselves, is sufficient to account for his becoming entirely corrupt and bent on sinning against God,” “without occasion for *any positive influence at all*” “either from *God or the creature* ;” “and that it was thus that corruption of nature came on Adam, and comes on all his posterity,”—not that *besides* God's withdrawing and the consequent extinction of his superior principles, some other ‘influence’ intervened to constitute

his nature corrupt. In all these representations then, he exhibits this corruption as a physical attribute. As the physical constitution was the sole subject of the change by which the corruption was produced, and as the change itself was purely a physical change, the effect—corruption—produced by it, must of course have been purely a physical effect. In other words, it was simply as a substance that the nature of man was rendered whatever it was rendered by that change, and therefore as it was constituted corrupt by it, its corruption was an attribute of its substance.' pp. 39, 40, 41.

5. Edwards exhibits the same views in his doctrine, respecting *created dispositions*.

'Human nature,' he contends, 'must be created with some dispositions;' and these 'concreated dispositions' must be 'either right or wrong,' 'morally right and amiable,' or 'vicious.' 'Which supposes,' by his own admission, 'that a virtuous disposition of mind may be *before* a virtuous act of CHOICE, and that, therefore, it is not necessary that there should first be thought, reflection and choice *before* there can be any virtuous disposition.'* This admission is important in this controversy, as it shows, incontestably, that Edwards supposed moral qualities to belong to human nature *antece-*
dently to any exertion of its powers; when nothing could be predicated of it but its physical attributes, and when, of course, the moral qualities, asserted to have belonged to it, must be supposed to have belonged to it physically, that is to say, constitutionally. They were not in any sense acts or operations of that nature, nor effects resulting from any such acts or operations, nor from any relation or external circumstance, but properties with which the nature was created.

6. The doctrine of physical depravity is likewise implied in Edwards' theory respecting the *imputation of Adam's sin*.

The following is a fair statement of his views on this subject :

'Suppose it to turn out that Edwards represents the sin of Adam as consisting,—not in the external act of eating the forbidden fruit,—but in his having *a disposition*, which led him to that act, and which is in itself sinful :—that the way in which his posterity sin by him,—is not at all by his guilt's being transferred to them,—but by their having in consequence of their constituted union with him a

* Edwards' Work, VI. 260.

disposition, which like his is fully sufficient for and amounts to the commission of the same external sin, and is therefore like his in itself sinful:—and finally that the imputation of his sin to them does not consist at all in the transference of his sin or guilt to them,—but simply in the imputation to them of their own sinful disposition as implying and amounting to the same thing as his sin;—will it then involve too gross an inconsistency to impute to him, to represent him as teaching the doctrine of physical depravity in his views of imputation? That such is his theory will be seen from the following quotations.' p. 50.

Our limits will not permit us to give these quotations at length; which, indeed, is the less necessary, as in the following *Note** Edwards professes to illustrate his meaning in all that had been said.

'Let us suppose that Adam and all his posterity had been, through a law of nature established by the Creator, united to him something as the branches of a tree are united to the root, or the members of the body to the head, so as to constitute as it were one complex person, or one moral whole, so that by the law of union there should have been a communion and co-existence in acts and affections, all jointly participating, and all concurring as one whole in the disposition and action of the head, as we see in the body natural the whole body is affected as the head is affected, and the whole body concurs as the head acts. Now in this case the hearts of all the branches of mankind, by the constitution of nature and law of union, would have been affected, just as the heart of Adam their common root was affected. When the heart of the root by a full disposition committed the first sin, the hearts of all the branches would have concurred; and when the root in consequence of this became guilty, so would all the branches; and when the heart of the root, as a punishment of the sin committed, was forsaken of God, in like manner would it have fared with all the branches; and when the heart of the root in consequence of this was confirmed in *permanent depravity*, the case would have been the same with all the branches; and as *new guilt* on the soul of Adam would have been consequent on this, so also would it have been with his moral branches. And thus *all things* with relation to *evil disposition, guilt, pollution and depravity*, would exist in the same *order and dependence in each branch* as in the *root*. Now difference of the *time* of existence does not at all *hinder* things succeeding in the same order, any more than difference of *place* in a *co-existence* of time.'

* Edwards' Works, VI. 439.

Edwards thinks by this theory to parry an objection to his system, founded on the manifest injustice of imputing to Adam's posterity the guilt of a sin, in which they had no participation. He denies the fact, and asserts that they *do* 'participate' in that sin. According to him Adam's sin consisted, not in the external act, but in his having an evil and sinful disposition ; which must have existed in him *prior* to any of its exercises, that is to say, prior to any act of thought, choice, or volition originating in it ; a disposition evil and sinful *in itself*. Now he contends, and in perfect consistency with what has been already said of his doctrine concerning 'created dispositions,' that, since the fall, the whole race of Adam, by a strange 'law of union' with their head, are constituted such by nature, that 'at their first existence' they have this same evil and sinful disposition. It is true, it is not until afterwards, that this disposition develops itself in any act of thought, choice, or volition ; but no matter for that. Adam was guilty of his sin, *before* the disposition in which it consisted had developed itself *in him* in any act of thought, choice, or volition ; and so likewise his posterity are. Consequently, when it is said that Adam's sin is imputed to his posterity, the meaning is, that they inherit in their very make and constitution the same evil and sinful disposition in which Adam's sin consisted, and do of course *participate* in that sin from their first existence, though as yet it may not have developed itself in any act of thought, choice, or volition whatsoever.

It is obvious that T. R. entirely mistakes the drift of this section, for he asks : 'How could Edwards, without falling into an inconsistency too gross to be imputed to him, maintain that the *only* guilt, which belongs to man, when he comes into the world, is the imputed guilt of Adam's sin, and yet maintain that he is the subject of a natural propensity which is *in itself* sinful and deserving of punishment ?' Simply because 'the imputed guilt of Adam's sin,' and being 'the subject of a natural propensity, which is in itself sinful and deserving of punishment,' are *one and the same thing*, according to Edwards' theory. His theory, therefore, directly contrary to what is said of it by T. R. 'exhibits man as personally guilty at his first existence ;' nay, this doctrine, that man is personally guilty at his first existence, is identically

what constitutes Edwards' view of imputation,—the soul and substance of all he teaches on the subject. Seeing, then, that this theory exhibits original sin as consisting in a depraved and ill-deserving disposition, which 'inheres' in our nature at our first existence,—a disposition which is not the result of circumstances, nor of any act of choice, volition, or thought, but of constitution, and of constitution solely,—it would seem that according to this theory, original sin must be a constitutional property, or in other words, an essential, substantial, physical attribute of our nature.

Here, perhaps, T. R. and those who think with him, may start a quibble on the words 'created,' 'concreated,' and 'constituted,' to evade the force of this reasoning, and also of some of the preceding arguments. They will pretend, that though human nature, since the fall, is *constituted* corrupt and guilty, still it is not meant by this that it was *created* such; for it was created long before, and created 'innocent.' Besides, they will say, Edwards expressly teaches that 'the common natural principles,' as he calls them, which constitute human nature what it is at present, belonged to it previously, when 'man was in innocence.' In his view, therefore, original sin could not have been a physical or essential attribute of those principles; for in that case, contrary to his express declaration, it must have belonged to them *always*, as well before the fall as after.

There may be to some a sort of bewildering plausibility in these suggestions; but a little care will enable us to unravel and expose the sophistry. When we speak of the *nature* of any thing, we do not speak of the 'principles' that compose it considered in themselves, and taken separately, but of those principles existing in combination, and forming by such combination one complex whole, possessing *as a whole* its peculiar and essential attributes or properties. Though therefore Edwards maintains throughout his work that original sin belongs to human *nature*, as now constituted, as a substantial, essential attribute, this did not forbid his maintaining, also, that the very 'principles' which compose this nature, had existed previously in another and a different combination composing *a part* of another and a different nature, to which no such attribute appertained. If it is still contended that Edwards expressly denies that original sin was *concreated*

with these 'common and natural principles,' because he expressly asserts that they had existed previously when man was in innocence ; the answer is, that this does not touch the real question at issue. The question is not, whether original sin was concreated with these 'principles' considered in themselves, or with the nature of which these principles constituted *a part*, and *but* a part ; but whether it was not concreated with that nature of which they constitute *the whole*. When, we may ask, was man's nature, constituted as it is at present, created ? Unquestionably when it first began to exist, constituted as it is at present ; and this, according to Edwards, was at the fall. But from this time, according to Edwards, original sin has 'inhered' in this nature as a substantial, essential attribute ; and if so, of course it was 'concreated' with it. According to Edwards, therefore, it belongs to our nature, constituted as it is at present, as a substantial, essential, concreated attribute ; and this, all will agree, would be to make it a physical depravity.

7. He also represents *the Scriptures* as expressly inculcating this doctrine.

His words are :

'One thing is particularly observable in that discourse of the Apostle in the 7th and 8th of Romans, in which he so often uses the term *flesh* as opposite to *spirit*, which as well as many other things in his discourse, makes it *plain* that by *flesh*, he means *something* IN ITSELF corrupt and sinful, and that is, that he expressly calls it *Sinful flesh*.

'The Apostle by *flesh* does not mean any thing that is *innocent and good* IN ITSELF,—that only needs to be *restrained* and kept in *proper bounds*, but something *altogether evil*, which is to be *destroyed* and not *merely restrained*." "Here, if it should be inquired *how corruption or depravity in general, or the nature of man as corrupt and sinful*, came to be called *flesh*, and not only *that* corruption, which consists in inordinate bodily appetites, I think what the Apostle says in the last cited place, "are ye not carnal and walk as *men*," leads us to the true reason. It is because *a corrupt and sinful nature* is what *properly belongs* to mankind or the race of Adam, *as they are* IN THEMSELVES *and as they are* BY NATURE.*

After this the reader may be surprised to find T. R. maintaining that Edwards does not *mean* that the natural depravity

* Edwards' Works, VI. 318 *et seq.*

of mankind is '*in itself*' sinful; nay, that he 'virtually denies' that it is so. How, it may be asked, can he support with any plausibility, a supposition so manifestly contradictory to Edwards' own language on the subject?—Mean! What reason has he to suppose that Edwards does not mean what he says? Especially as in speaking of human nature, he uses these very words, '*in itself* sinful,' and repeats them with marked precision and distinctness, as if nothing short of them would express his full and exact meaning; and especially, too, as no intimation is expressed that these words are not to be understood literally, but, on the contrary, when so understood, they no more than accord with his language in other places, with the plan of his book, and his design in writing it.

T. R. contends that the terms used by Edwards are *sometimes* understood figuratively, and therefore that they *may* be so understood as *used by him*, without considering that every thing in the connexion requires that they should be understood differently. A fine canon of criticism truly! The pamphlet under review, gives us the following lively and spirited exposition of its absurdity, and also reasons against it by an argument *ad hominem*.

'Again; his argument is,—that if the terms which a man employs ever have a *figurative* signification, his using them, and in any manner he pleases, cannot furnish any evidence that he employs them in their *literal* sense! But the terms used by T. R. have in some "applications" a figurative meaning. It follows therefore that he *always* uses them with that signification, and also that they are always employed by every one else in the same sense; and therefore that they never have a *literal* meaning, and consequently,—since a figurative meaning never exists without a literal one to which it is related,—that they have no *figurative* meaning, and therefore that they have no meaning at all, which is precisely in accordance with T. R.'s rule, and is certainly an excellent reason why no regard should be paid to a man's language in determining what his meaning is.

'But let the accuracy of this rule be tested by an application to other topicks. The names of the Deity are sometimes figuratively appropriated to created beings; therefore their being applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, even in the manner in which they are in the sacred volume, cannot furnish any evidence that they are not in those instances used with that figurative signification. There is then no evidence from that source of the divinity of the Son of God! Such an argument has often been advanced by Unitarians,

and with propriety undoubtedly, if T. R.'s reasoning has any force. Can he be aware how he is thus sanctioning their use of it, and be willing to be regarded as here volunteering in their service, who at the commencement of his discussion he seemed anxious to have it believed, are the only persons whose views he opposes in this controversy? pp. 76, 77.

But, it is urged, to understand Edwards *literally*, would be to suppose him to ascribe '*moral* qualities' to '*involuntary* states of mind,' which is absurd. Whether absurd or not, T. R. and his friends will please to observe, is wide of the present question; but that this doctrine is expressly and really taught by Edwards, has been made to appear, we trust, already in what has been said; especially under the head of '*created dispositions*.' We defy the ingenuity of man to express this doctrine in language more precise, and unequivocal, than is used by Edwards for this purpose, and that too, not once nor twice, but again and again, and even where it is not expressly asserted, it is uniformly implied, as we have seen, in all the great positions he has taken.

"No *moral* quality,"—"strictly [that is *literally*] speaking—belongs" to "*involuntary* states of the mind,"—therefore Edwards never applied the terms "*corrupt tendency,—sinful, depraved propensity—depraved, sinful, vicious disposition,*" &c.—to such states of the mind, with a purpose of representing them as *having* a moral quality! For example, Edwards says, "a propensity to sin, is *evil* not only as it is calamitous and sorrowful, but as it is *odious and detestable,*" and "must be a *very evil, depraved, and pernicious* propensity, making it manifest that the soul of man, as it is by nature, is in a *corrupt, fallen, and ruined* STATE," that this "tendency is doubtless a *corrupt tendency* in A MORAL SENSE, so that this depravity is both *odious and pernicious* in the highest sense," that "*corruption or depravity,—or the nature of man as corrupt and sinful,* came to be called *flesh*, because a *corrupt and sinful nature is what properly belongs to mankind as they are in themselves, and as they are by nature,*"—and that "one thing in the discourse of the Apostle makes it plain, by *flesh* he means something IN ITSELF *corrupt and sinful*, and that is that he expressly calls it *sinful* flesh." Here are some specimens of "the applications" in which the terms in question are used in the Treatise; yet "these terms, as used by Edwards, do not decide that he means that which is in itself sinful and deserving of punishment!" pp. 74, 75.

T. R.'s third argument to prove that Edwards' language on this subject must not be understood literally, is equally extraordinary. He quotes from that writer several passages like the following: 'Then may it be said, man's nature or state is attended with a pernicious or destructive tendency in a moral sense, when it tends to that which deserves misery and destruction.'* And from such phraseology he strangely infers, that when Edwards speaks of our nature as 'corrupt and sinful in itself,' he could only have meant a nature which *tends* to what is sinful,—a state which will inevitably be *followed* by sin in existing circumstances.

It was, to be sure, *one* principal object of Edwards in his Treatise to prove, that a tendency to sin 'inheres' in our nature, but *another* was, that this tendency to sin is 'in itself' sinful. It is not of a sinful tendency merely, that Edwards speaks, in which case the remarks of T. R. might perhaps apply; but subsequently of a sinful tendency to sin: and what may that mean? Why, according to T. R. simply that a tendency to sin is a tendency that tends to sin. What unexampled nonsense, and this, too, to be ascribed to such a reasoner as Edwards! On this topick, however, it is impossible to find better words than those used by our author. Speaking of the third section of the first part of the Treatise in question, he says:

'His object here then is,—not to prove that mankind *have* a propensity to sin,—for he had established that position in the preceding section,—but to prove in *addition* to that, that that propensity must *itself be sinful*, and then from that supposed fact, that *the soul itself*, as it is by nature, is corrupt and sinful. To ascribe to him any other design, is so palpably to contradict his language, and so obviously to involve him in the most appalling absurdity, that it excites surprise that any one can have done it.

'If as T. R. alleges, Edwards applies the terms moral, sinful, depraved, corrupt, odious, detestable, evil, bad, &c. to the tendency, propensity, state, and nature of man, only to express the simple fact that his nature, propensity, &c. *tends to sin*, then his second inference is nothing more than a repetition of his first,—and his object in his third section,—which he represents as being to demonstrate that that propensity to sin, which he had in the second section "proved to be in the nature of all mankind, must be a very evil, depraved, and pernicious propensity,—making it

* Edwards' Works, p. 133.

manifest that the soul of man as it is by nature is in a corrupt, fallen, and ruined state,"—is only to prove what he had before established, that that propensity to sin which is in the nature of all mankind, is *verily a propensity to sin*, making it manifest that the soul of man as it is by nature is in a state that *tends to sin* !" p. 80.

8. The account given by T. R. of Edwards' doctrine, would make his whole Treatise as *absurd in purpose*, as in execution.

We have already seen, that supposing this account of Edwards' doctrine correct, his plan of argument, and several of his most important positions, are inconsistent and absurd. Nor is this all. Supposing this account correct, there was no earthly reason for his undertaking the controversy. Our author very justly remarks :

'If that account is correct, Edwards was entirely mistaken in imagining that any necessity existed for demonstrating and vindicating the doctrine of original sin in opposition to Dr. Taylor. He employed himself through his whole discussion in contending with a mere creature of his fancy, and was guilty of the grossest folly and injustice in regarding Dr. Taylor as an antagonist. For according to T. R.'s representation, their doctrines were in all *important respects*—if not identically—*the same*. It was not in the remotest degree a subject of dispute between them, whether all men come into the world in such a state that they actually run into sin, and thereby incur a desert of punishment, nor whether they are very apt to sin ; for by Edwards' own statement Dr. Taylor expressly confessed and asserted that, pp. 139. 148. But the sole question between them was, whether the created nature of man is depraved with a depravity that is itself sinful, and is the cause of his exerting sinful actions.

'If therefore according to T. R., Edwards did not teach that such a depravity belongs to human nature, but expressly disclaimed and denied it, and only taught that there is "something concerned in bringing sin to pass, which is not an essential attribute of man's nature," but "depends on his external circumstances, and may wholly cease by a change in these circumstances,"—then he laboured under the grossest misapprehension in imagining that his Treatise was a refutation "of Dr. Taylor's scheme." The idea of its being a controversy with him, is a stark absurdity. Their creeds instead of being opposed, were coincident, and they were labouring together in the same cause, and in the most happy harmony ! What an encomium on their discernment ! It has been

said that the arguments of Edwards so baffled and chagrined his antagonist as to occasion his death. How unfortunate was it that some one gifted with the happy perspicacity of T. R. was not present to extricate him from so absurd an embarrassment, and develop to him the consolations, which the Treatise was adapted to afford.' pp. 82, 83, 84.

9. The doctrine of physical depravity has been held and taught, from the Reformation to the present time, by all that part of the Reformed Church, with which Edwards has been considered as agreeing.

To establish this point, our author refers to his 'Proofs' contained in the pamphlet first mentioned, at the head of this article, of which some notice and a summary has already been given.

10. It may be added in further confirmation of this view of Edwards' doctrine, that neither T. R. nor any of his coadjutors, have been able to produce a single passage from the Treatise in question, in which the writer expressly declares or implies, that his doctrine is what T. R. asserts it to be.

This has been shown as we have proceeded with the argument; and our limits will not admit of our going into a recapitulation. Under this head, however, some animadversions are introduced on the unfairness of T. R. which ought not to be passed over in silence, as they likewise apply to other writers on the same side of the question.

'It ought to be observed also, that in professedly giving his reader, on his first page, Edwards' account of the subject of his Treatise, he has represented it as though it were nothing more than what is contained in Edwards' general position, in which he simply affirms that all mankind sin and incur a demerit of ruin;—and merely quoting that proposition, has totally omitted Edwards' inference from it contained in the next sentence—"*that therefore their Nature is corrupt and depraved with a moral depravity,*" which is *the only part of his subject with which this controversy is concerned*;—and then proceeded to remark and reason as though Edwards in this statement at the commencement of his Treatise of what he designed to establish in it, *expressly excluded* the doctrine that the physical nature of man is depraved!—and what perhaps is still worse,—has never in his whole discussion taken any notice of that inference, nor given to his readers the remotest intimation that Edwards ever made and endeavoured to sustain it, much less that it was "*the grand point,*" which by his own account he wrote

the Treatise *to prove*, and to which his general proposition and every thing else in the work are only *subsidiary*! He has not indeed quoted a passage with the exception of one in which Edwards speaks of "*the corruption of Nature*," nor hinted that he used such language.

'It is by thus omitting to notice those portions of the Treatise which relate most directly to the subject in dispute, and a knowledge of which is by far the most material to the reader in order to his forming a correct view of Edwards' doctrine, that he has been able to give any show of plausibility to his denial that Edwards teaches what those passages contain, and by only quoting places which are much less decisive of the controversy, that he has been able to make such representations of Edwards' doctrine as are adapted to lead those who happen to rely implicitly on his statements, to the conclusion that Edwards does not teach what is in fact the "*grand*" doctrine of his Treatise.' pp. 88, 89, 90.

Thus do we sustain the assertion, that according to Edwards, original sin is a physical attribute of the soul,—'a created attribute of its substance, inhering in, and contributing to make up its nature, and constitute it what it is;' and, moreover, that the soul, merely from its being so constituted, and independent of all circumstances, is, in itself, and of itself, sinful and deserving of punishment, in the same sense as it is for exerting sinful actions; and this, too, prior to any such actions.

We hope that none of our readers will look upon this discussion as unimportant, merely because it relates to the doctrine of an individual, or because it is 'nothing but metaphysics.' The truth is, it turns upon a point, however abstruse, which labours more than any other in the present state of the Calvinistick controversy. Many of the objections urged against Calvinism, do imply that it teaches a physical depravity, and they can *only* be repelled by a flat denial of what it is the object of this Review to demonstrate. It seemed incumbent on us, therefore, to set forth and explain our views on this subject, in greater form than heretofore. After speaking of the nature and mischievous influences of the doctrine, which we have been attempting to expose, the anonymous author of these pamphlets offers the following judicious remarks on the importance, and probable issue of this discussion.

'That such are the character, prevalence, and influence of this doctrine, are surely facts of the most solemn interest to the clergy

and publick at large, and deserve to become, and undoubtedly must ultimately, the theme of earnest consideration. The subject has indeed already attracted no inconsiderable share of attention, and its nature and the controversies respecting it, authorize the expectation that it is soon to excite a much more general and ardent interest. The doctrine must necessarily, at some period or other, *be given up* by the church,—manifestly from the fact that it is a most palpable and fatal error;—and strong probabilities appear that its abandonment,—at least to a considerable extent,—is speedily to take place. It is not to be believed that a dogma, which, like that, contradicts the dictates of human reason, consciousness, and obligation, the doctrines of revelation, and the attributes of the Deity, can continue uninterruptedly to be held and inculcated, when men are on all other subjects fearlessly breaking away from a vassalage to names and systems, asserting the right of judging for themselves, acquiring habits of independent investigation, and rapidly advancing in the knowledge of mental philosophy, logic, and criticism. It has through every period of its prevalence been a source of excruciating perplexity and embarrassment to multitudes of every rank in intellect and knowledge;—reason has been confounded and faith staggered by its felt inconsistency with innumerable of the most important truths learnt from revelation and experience;—and discussion respecting it and the progress of knowledge on the topics to which it related, will more and more develope its deformity and perniciousness, and render its rejection inevitable by all, whose ignorance or prejudice does not debar truth from access to their minds, or prevent it from exerting over their faith its legitimate influence. They are now indeed encouraging indications that important changes are taking place in the views of many respecting it. But although its ultimate abandonment may thus be regarded as certain,—yet enjoying as it does the sanction of great names and of a long prevalence,—wrought as it is into the prevailing system of theology,—and possessing a strong hold on the faith of the church at large, it is not to be expected that it will at once be generally relinquished, nor without severe struggles on the one hand to accomplish its extermination, and on the other to vindicate and perpetuate it.' pp. 99, 100, 101.

We did intend before concluding, to revert to the peculiar views advocated by our author, 'relative to the nature and character of man as a Moral Agent,' especially as regards his first acts of sin, and their proximate causes, and his first acts of holiness, and their proximate causes. But as we have already run out this article, considering its subject, to unconscionable dimensions, we shall reserve what we have to say on those topics for another number.

Intelligence.

American Bible Society.—This institution celebrated its ninth anniversary on the 12th of May last, at the City Hotel, in New York. Governor Clinton presided, and addressed the meeting in a very impressive manner, and paid an eloquent tribute to the memory of Matthew Clarkson, Esq. one of the Vice Presidents of the Society, deceased. An interesting address was communicated from the venerable President, Mr. Jay, whose infirmities prevented his attendance. The Treasurer's Report represented the finances of the Society in a very flourishing condition; the receipts of the present exceeding those of the last year, by \$4,589. There have been printed at the Depository, during the year, 48,450 bibles and testaments, including 2000 Spanish bibles, making a total, in the nine years of the Society's existence, of 451,902 bibles and testaments, and parts of the latter printed, or otherwise obtained by the Society. The managers have recently been engaged in contributing to the supply of penitentiaries and prisons with the Scriptures; and the troops stationed at remote parts of the United States. They have been animated in their work by the readiness, with which the bible has been received in South America, and the evident softening of the prejudices of the people, in relation to the circulation of the Scriptures. *Christian Enquirer.*

Evangelical Missionary Society.—The anniversary of this Society was held at the vestry of the Church in Federal street, on the Wednesday evening of election week, at half past six o'clock. After the transaction of the usual business, the members repaired to the church, where a Discourse was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Flint, of Salem.

We give the following extracts from the yearly Report of the Trustees.

'The Trustees have the satisfaction to state, that the present condition of the society is prosperous, and that its prospects are equally as favourable and encouraging as at any former period. Its friends are increasing, and it only requires activity and zeal in its members to excite a still greater interest in its favour.

'Since the last anniversary, the Executive Committee have employed several missionaries in places destitute of regular preachers of the Gospel; and have afforded aid to settled ministers, whose circumstances were such as to call for additional means of support. The grants made for these purposes, during the year past, exceed those made at any former period. For the respective years 1822

and 1823, about \$900 were granted. But in the course of the last year \$1410 have been allowed for missionary purposes.

‘There are several *established* missionaries or settled ministers, who perform missionary service in their respective neighbourhoods, who have received aid from our society for a number of years. Their situation remains much the same; and it is believed they still merit our assistance. Some *new* cases, during the year past, were made known to the committee, and assistance solicited, which, after due examination, was readily granted. Instances more frequently occur, than formerly, of the diminution of regular Congregational Societies, from the prevalence of various sects in the country, at the present day, and of the legal facilities of forming new Societies, which render the situation of settled clergymen unpleasant and embarrassed.

‘The Executive Committee have had many applications, growing out of such cases, with which they have considered it their duty to comply; especially as this was a particular object of the original members of the society. They have also afforded pecuniary aid to several societies recently formed; which have been thus enabled to obtain settled ministers.’

The report here mentions *thirteen* different religious Societies, that have received assistance during the year past; and then proceeds to say;—

‘Tracts are generally given to our missionaries for distribution: and are believed to be very useful. Perhaps it would subserve the interests of piety and morality, if a larger sum was appropriated in this way in future.

‘The present state of our country is such as to require our continued efforts in the cause of religion. Much is to be done by individuals and societies for the support of Christian ministers in distant parts of this state, and in other states. The spirit of religious freedom is spreading; and while it produces many good effects, it is the occasion of various sects, and of divisions in old established Societies. This state of things, perhaps, cannot be entirely prevented; but something may be done, by the enlightened and liberal, to assist those from whom a portion of their usual support is withdrawn, and to maintain a just sense of the importance of regular religious instructions by learned and pious ministers.’

The receipts of the Society during the past year, were \$1472,81. The expenditures during the same time were \$1410,46.

A number of sums have been contributed to the funds of the society, which have not yet been publicly acknowledged. As we have not, at this moment, the means of designating them with accuracy, we shall defer it till a future opportunity.

The increased amount of the receipts of this society, during the past year, evince that it is becoming an object of general attention. The excellence of its plan is undoubted ; and the good it has already done is too manifest to suffer it to be regarded by enlightened and liberal Christians with any other feelings than those of deep interest and affection. We trust that the many small but acceptable contributions, by which the amount of the funds is annually increased, will not be suffered to abate, but will still, like so many refreshing streams, increase the generous fountain, that it may continue permanently and more extensively to refresh and fertilize the moral wilderness. *Christian Register.*

Convention of Congregational Ministers.—The usual meetings of this body were held on Wednesday and Thursday of election week. The usual business was conducted with great unanimity. The Annual Discourse was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Peirce, of Brookline, from 2 Tim. iv. 5. on the ‘Peculiar Trials of the Ministry.’ The collection, amounting to \$365, with some additions from the funds of the Convention, and from the Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society, is divided this year among thirty-six widows and orphans of clergymen, and in sums regulated by the circumstances of the respective individuals. We greatly rejoice in the harmony, with which the transactions of this meeting have for the last two anniversaries, been conducted ; regarding as we do, its sacred charity as the grand object of its institution.

The Ministerial Conference in Berry street, was holden on the morning of election day at the vestry of the Church in Federal street. Rev. Dr. Bancroft was rechosen Moderator, and the Rev. Henry Ware, Jun. Scribe. An address on the importance of an exemplary character in ministers, was delivered by the Rev. Winthrop Bailey, of Pelham ; and several interesting communications on the state and prospects of religion, in different parishes of the commonwealth and neighbouring states, were presented by their respective ministers.

American Unitarian Association.—A Society, under this appellation, has recently been formed ; the objects of which are to ‘diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity throughout our country ;’ inviting the union and cooperation of liberal Christians throughout the United States. According to its constitution, an annual subscription of one dollar shall constitute a person a member, so long as such subscription is paid ; and a subscription of \$30 shall constitute a person a member for life. Its annual meetings are to be held at such times and places as the Executive Committee, to be appointed by the Society, shall deem advisable.

The following copy of a Circular, just issued by the Committee, will best explain the spirit and wishes of this new institution.

‘At a meeting of gentlemen from various places, held in Boston the 25th day of May, 1825, a proposition was made for forming some bond of connexion and cooperation among the Unitarian Christians of the United States. After deliberate discussion it was thought that the time had arrived, when such a measure would be generally acceptable, and greatly conduce to the extension of correct religious sentiments. A committee was accordingly appointed to draft articles of association, who reported a Constitution; which having been considered, was unanimously accepted. The Association was then organized by the choice of officers, and a subscription immediately opened.

‘The Executive Committee of the Association, to whom are intrusted the management of its concerns and the accomplishment of its purposes, present to the publick the following brief exposition of the objects it is designed to promote. They wish it to be understood, that, in accordance with the second article of the Constitution, its efforts will be directed to the promotion of true religion throughout our country; intending by this, not exclusively those views which distinguish the friends of this Association from other disciples of Jesus Christ; but those views in connexion with the great doctrines and principles in which all Christians coincide, and which constitute the substance of our religion. We wish to diffuse the knowledge and influence of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour. Great good is anticipated from the cooperation of persons entertaining similar views, who are now strangers to each other’s religious sentiments. Interest will be awakened, confidence inspired, and efficiency produced by the concentration of labours. The spirit of inquiry will be fostered, and individuals at a distance will know where to apply for information and encouragement. Respectability and strength will be given to that class among us, whom our fellow christians have excluded from the control of their religious charities, and whom, by their exclusive treatment, they have compelled in some measure to act as a party. The more immediate purposes of the Association may be thus enumerated.

‘1. To collect and diffuse information respecting the state of Unitarian Christianity in our country.

‘2. To produce union, sympathy, and cooperation among liberal Christians.

‘3. To publish and distribute books and tracts inculcating correct views of religion, in such form and at such price as shall afford all an opportunity of becoming acquainted with christian truth.

‘4. To employ missionaries, especially in such parts of our country as are destitute of a stated ministry.

‘5. To adopt whatever other measures may hereafter seem expedient, such as contributions in behalf of clergymen with insufficient salaries, or in aid of building churches, &c. &c.

‘The Directors of the Association are desirous to avoid parade and ostentation. They do not expect to equal other institutions in the extent or display of their resources. Their attention for some time will be turned almost exclusively to the printing and distribution of tracts. Other efforts will be made as their resources shall increase.

‘They look with confidence to the friends of the same cause in every part of the country, for countenance and aid. They solicit their assistance by annual or life subscriptions, by subscriptions in parishes to constitute their pastors members for life, by donations, by the purchase of tracts for distribution, and by auxiliary associations in parishes, towns, or neighbourhoods. Such associations should send delegates to the annual meeting, and each member of an auxiliary, or of this Association will be entitled, on application to any agent, to receive a copy of all their publications.’

JAMES WALKER,	} <i>Executive Committee.</i>
HENRY WARE, JR.	
SAMUEL BARRETT,	
LEWIS TAPPAN,	
EZRA S. GANNETT,	

The Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance, held its annual meeting on the afternoon of May 27, in the Church in Chauncey-place. An appropriate Address was delivered by Dr. John Ware, preceded by religious services, which were performed by the Rev. Dr. Thayer, of Lancaster. The officers of the past year were reelected.

Massachusetts Bible Society.—The seventeenth anniversary of this Institution, was held also in the Church in Chauncey-place, on Thursday, June 9, and a Discourse was preached by the Rev. Elijah Fiske, of Wrentham, from Rom. iii. 1. The collection was small; and it is a subject of our deep regret, that an anniversary of such importance, and in the object proposed so completely adapted to unite the prayers and efforts of Christians of every name, should be so negligently attended, as are those of this venerable Society.

The American Bible Society.—The following is an extract from the last Report of the ‘American Bible Society,’ which has just been received, and whose annual meeting on the 12th of May last, we have already noticed.

‘During the past year, your Treasury has been supplied in an encouraging degree; but from the peculiar circumstances of the very extensive and newly settled country in the west, where the greater part of the recent auxiliaries have been formed, the increase

of receipts into your Treasury does not bear a full proportion to the number of new auxiliaries. Nevertheless, in the rapid growth of the population, and in the increasing facilities of intelligence and of wealth, through all that country, there is a most cheering prospect of efficient aid in future.

‘The receipts into the Treasury, and the number of Bibles and Testaments, issued during the last year, exceed the issues and receipts of the year preceding, as may be seen in their proper places; and the balance is encouraging.

‘The Board of Managers are fully aware that there is an opinion very currently circulated, and generally received, that the receipts into the Treasury, of free donations and subscriptions, unbalanced by any returns of value to the donors and subscribers, are very great, amounting to almost the whole annual income. This opinion is both *unfounded*, and *injurious*, and should be fully examined, and well considered by every friend of the Bible Society. It is *unfounded*, because the Society returns in value almost all that it receives in money. This may be fully understood by a reference to the account of receipts into the Treasury, compared with the account of sales, and donations from the Society. It is *injurious*, as it makes a false impression on the minds both of the friends and enemies of the Bible, in relation to our annual income, and countenances a belief that the Society has no necessity for increased resources. This impression relaxes the efforts of the benevolent, turns the benefactions of many into other channels, misleads some auxiliaries, so far as to invest their surplus funds, rather than transmit them to a treasury, supposed to be already overflowing; it induces others to neglect the collection of their annual dues, and some to cease from all operations.

‘The Board fondly cherish the hope, that this subject will be fully examined and understood, by every auxiliary, and by every friend of the Parent Institution.

Let it be fully understood, and kept in mind, that the whole amount of money in the Treasury, during the last year, was only	-	-	-	-	-	\$50,167	80
That of this sum there were returned in Bibles and Testaments sold to Auxiliaries at five per cent less than cost	-	-	-	-	-	24,773	50
To Societies and individuals, on the same terms	-	-	-	-	-	3,242	05
Returned in free donations to Auxiliary Societies, Bibles and Testaments, amounting to	-	-	-	-	-	8,797	41
To this add the five per cent on the above sales	-	-	-	-	-	1,400	77
Cost of stereotype plates	-	-	-	-	-	2,009	90
Loss, on counterfeit bills, and uncurrent money	-	-	-	-	-	181	81
Expenses of travelling agents, and compensation to the same	-	-	-	-	-	255	18

Rent of the Society's building, to the Trustees of the building	- - - - -	1,600 00
Insurance of property against fire	- - - - -	255 00
Printing and Binding of Reports, Extracts, and Brief Views	- - - - -	1,144 43
		<hr/>
		\$43,660 05

Leaving a balance of only six thousand five hundred and seven dollars and seventy-five cents, to be applied to the translating and printing the Scriptures in foreign languages; and the circulating of them in foreign parts, or in our own country, where there are no Auxiliary Societies formed, and where the people are very destitute of the Sacred Volume.'

Intelligence from Hayti.—The Rev. Loring D. Dewey, Agent of the Colonization Society, has recently returned from Hayti; and by notices he has brought from the government, it appears that some new arrangements have been found necessary, relative to the future accommodation of the coloured people, who may emigrate to that island.

It appears that in consequence of some base speculations entered into by emigrants with others, the Secretary General has issued the following notice.

Translation.

'In offering an asylum to the free African population, living in the United States, in the deprivation of every political right, the government of the Republick had less in view, its own interests, than the happiness of that oppressed people. Its munificence has even exceeded expectation, for instead of confining itself to encouraging emigration, it has undertaken it entirely at its charge.

'After this, it was far from expecting that the transportation of the emigrants would have been made a matter of sordid speculation, or that there would have been among foreign ship owners, as well as among the emigrants themselves, persons so base as to deceive its good faith. Nevertheless, it did not require long to know that, not content with employing intrigue to persuade the return of the emigrants already settled in the profits of this speculation, in order to increase its range. How many in effect have we seen, who, scarcely landed in our ports, have demanded the privilege of departing, one after another, even before the expiration of the four months of rations granted by the state, and all, certainly, without having had the necessary time to ascertain if they should be able to do well or otherwise! If it is necessary to add further proof to that already obtained, of the connivance of a great number of emigrants with the ship owners, it may be stated here, that many families, carried on board the schooner Olive Branch, Capt. Mathews, which anchored in our port on the 4th of the present month, have demanded permits to depart, three days after disembarkation.

Could this have taken place if these emigrants, (who are so totally destitute of every thing, that the government of the Republick is obliged to pay, not only the expense of passage, but also that of their transportation from the interior of the United States, to the ports of embarkation,) were not interested in the gains of this stock-jobbing, rendered more facile, by the President's renouncing all claims on the emigrants, who have returned, for the expenses which they had occasioned?

Therefore, wishing to put an end to the abuses, which have resulted from the means employed to convert the emigration into a commercial speculation, and which without advancing the end proposed, essentially injures the publick treasury, the ship owners of the United States, and all others who may be in a situation to receive emigrants on board their vessels, for transportation to Hayti, are informed by the present notice, which shall be inserted three months in the Official Gazette, that no one may pretend ignorance as an excuse, that the government of the Republick will pay no expense whatever for the passage of said emigrants, after the 15th June of the present year, 1825.

Those persons in the United States, who have associated for the purpose of directing the affairs of the emigration in question, are also informed, that they will no longer be allowed by the government, after the above date, any sum for the assistance or transportation of those emigrants who wish to come to Hayti, and to whom hereafter it will grant nothing but the four months provisions already promised, and portions of land to be cultivated by them, for which they shall receive a title as soon as they shall have put it into a state of productiveness.

PORT-AU-PRINCE, April 12th, 1825—year 22.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

- A Collection of Essays and Tracts in Theology. By Jared Sparks. No. X. Boston.
Gospel Advocate. Vol. VI. Nos. 5 and 6.
A Sermon on the Communion; preached March 6, 1825, in the First Congregational Church in the City of New York. By William Ware.
Literary and Evangelical Magazine. Vol. VIII. Nos. 5 and 6. Richmond, 1825.
Discourses on the Offices and Character of Jesus Christ. By Henry Ware, Jr. Boston, 1825.

Missionary Herald. Vol. XXI. Nos. 5 and 6. Boston, 1825.

Sermon on the Art of Preaching; delivered before the Pastoral Association of Massachusetts, in Boston, May 25, 1825. By Edward D. Griffin, D. D.

Baptist Magazine, new Series. Nos. 5 and 6. May and June. 1825.

An Address to the Members of the Bar of Suffolk, Mass. at their stated Meeting. By William Sullivan.

Friend of Peace. No. IV. Vol. 4.

Review of the Rev. Mr. Colman's Sermon, delivered at the opening of the Independent Congregational Church, in Barton square. Second Edition; containing a Reply to Mr. Colman's Notes. 1825.

A Sermon, delivered before the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company, June 6, 1825. By Nathaniel L. Frothingham.

Edward, the Sunday Scholar; a Sketch from Real Life. By Mary Hughes.

The Two Farmers. Printed by the Trustees of the Publishing Fund, May, 1825.

The Duties of an American Citizen; Two Discourses delivered in the First Baptist Meeting House, on Thursday, April 7, 1825, the Day of Publick Fast. By Francis Wayland, Jr.

Leavitt's Easy Lessons; for Summer Schools. Second Edition, 1825.

Views in Theology. No. 3. President Edwards' Doctrine of Original Sin, the Doctrine of Physical Depravity. 12mo. pp. 104. New York. F. & R. Lockwood.

The Literary and Evangelical Magazine. Vol. VIII. No. 4. April, 1825. \$3 per annum. Richmond, Va.

The Christian Repository. By Samuel C. Loveland. Vol. V. No. 6. April, 1825. Woodstock, Vt.

Remarks on the Rise, Use, and Unlawfulness of Creeds and Confessions of Faith, in the Church of God. In two Parts. By John M. Duncan, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Tammany Street, Baltimore.

A Sermon on the Death of the Rev. John H. Livingston, D. D. S. T. P.; Preached before the General Synod at Albany, and at Poughkeepsie. By the Rev. C. C. Cuyler, A. M. With a short Memoir of his Life. 8vo. Price 25 cents. New York.

Lincoln's Scripture Questions, stereotyped, being the Fifth Edition. To which are now annexed the Answers from Scripture. 18mo. pp. 126. Lincoln & Edmands.

Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History. In 4 vols. 8vo. J. & J. Harper. New York.

A Sermon on the Occasion of the lamented Death of the Rev. Joseph Galluchat, of the Methodist Episcopal Church; Preach-

- ed in Trinity Chapel, Charleston, S. C. May 1st, 1825. By William Capers, Senior Pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in Charleston, S. C.
- Cunningham's Morning Thoughts on St. Matthew. Philadelphia. A. Finley.
- A Dissertation on the Nature, Obligations, and Form of a Civil Oath. By William Craig Brownlee, D. D. 8vo. pp. 44.
- The Christian Spectator ; conducted by an Association of Gentlemen. Vol. VII. No. 5. May, 1825.
- Redeeming the Time ; a Sermon by the Rev. Samuel M. Emerson, Pastor of a Church in Manchester.
- Discussion of Universalism ; or a Defence of Orthodoxy against the Heresy of Universalism, as advocated by Mr. Abner Kneeland, in the Debate in the Universalist Church, Lombard street, July, 1824, and in his various Publications, as also in those of Mr. Ballou and Others. By W. L. McCalla. Philadelphia.
- The Christian Journal and Literary Register. May, 1825. New York. T. & J. Swords.
- H elon's Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, a Picture of Judaism in the Century which preceded the Advent of our Saviour. Translated from the German of Frederick Strauss. 2 vols. 12mo. Boston. Wells & Lilly.
- The Claims of Past and Future Generations on Civil Rulers. A Sermon preached at the Annual Election, May 25, 1825, before His Honour, Marcus Morton, Esq. Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Council and the Legislature of Massachusetts. By William B. Sprague, Pastor of the First Church in West Springfield. 8vo. pp. 36. Boston. True & Green.
- A Brief Outline of the Evidences of the Christian Religion. By Archibald Alexander, D. D. Professor of Didactick Theology in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J. Price 87 cents Princeton.
- A Mirror, in which is shown the Likeness of professing Christians, who place no confidence in the Light Within, or Spirit of Truth, as being the Gift of God. New York.
- Essays on some of the First Principles of Metaphysicks, Ethicks, and Theology. By Asa Burton, D. D. Pastor of the Church of Christ in Thetford, Vt. 8vo. pp. 411. Portland. Arthur Shirley.
- The Gospel Advocate, No. LIV. June, 1825.
- A Dissertation on the Divinity of Christ. By William Fowler.
- The Design and the Importance of the Education Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Pennsylvania ; a Sermon preached on the evening of Sunday, the 8th of May, in St. Stephen's Church, in Philadelphia. By Wm. H. De Lancey,

Assistant Minister of Christ Church, St. Peter's, and St. James's, Philadelphia.

The Difficulties of Infidelity. By George Stanley Faber, D. D. Rector of Long Newton. New York. Wilder & Campbell.

DIED.

THE English papers have recently announced the death of Mrs. Letitia Barbauld; so long and so honourably distinguished for her literary and religious productions. She died on the ninth of March last, in the eighty-second year of her age, retaining to this venerable period in a remarkable degree, her fine intellectual and moral powers. The following brief sketch of her life is extracted from one of the journals of the day. We are happy to find, that a memoir from the pen of one, in every respect qualified for the task, is in preparation.

'This distinguished individual, whose fame was second to none among the female writers of her country, was born at Thilworth, Leicestershire, June 20th, 1743. She was daughter of the Rev. J. Aiken, D. D. and widow of the Rev. Rochemont Barbauld. She was indebted to her learned father for the solid foundation of a classical education; a boon at that period rarely bestowed on a daughter. In 1756, she accompanied her family to Warrington, Lancashire, where her father was appointed one of the tutors of a dissenting academy. She published at this place, in 1772, a volume of original poems, which immediately gave her a place in the first rank of living poets. The next year, in conjunction with her brother, the late J. Aikin, M. D. she gave to the world a small, but choice collection of *Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose*. On her marriage, in 1774, she went to reside at Palgrave, in Suffolk, where her "Early Lessons," and "Hymns in Prose for Children," were composed; master-pieces in the art of early instruction,—monuments at once, of her genius, and of the condescending benevolence which distinguished her.

'Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld quitted Palgrave, in 1785, and, after a tour on the continent, settled at Hampstead. Some pamphlets on religious and political topics, and a poetical epistle to Mr. Wilberforce, on the rejection of the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, were the principal efforts of her pen, during her residence at this place. In 1802, she and Mr. Barbauld removed to the village of Stoke Newington, where the remainder of her life was passed. A Selection from the *Spectator*, Tatler, &c. introduced by an essay; another from the correspondence of Richardson, with a life and critique on his works, and a collection of English novels, with prefaces, biographical and critical, served in succession to amuse her leisure. A higher effort of her powers was an original poem, entitled "Eighteen Hundred and Eleven," which appeared in the ensuing year, and was the latest of her separate publications. She still, however, continued to exercise occasionally her poetical powers, which she enjoyed the rare privilege of retaining in full vigour, to the termination of her long life. She sunk by a gradual decay, with little pain of body, and in perfect composure of mind. The moral qualities of this celebrated lady, reflected back a double lustre on her genius. Her principles were pure and elevated, her sentiments uniformly mild, candid, and generous. Never were faculties borne more meekly; neither pride nor envy had the smallest share in her composition; her courtesy and kindness to others, were unbounded; her society was equally a benefit and a delight to all within her sphere. She left behind her many and warm friends, and passed through life without an enemy. Mrs. Barbauld left at her demise, many unpublished pieces, both in verse and prose; and a complete edition of her writings, with a collection of her letters, may speedily be expected, introduced by a memoir of the author, from the pen of Miss Lucy Aikin.